



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Proposes U.N. Buffer Zone in Territories

Suggests Jordanian 'Confederation'

AU2503211091 Paris AFP in English 2045 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Toronto, March 25 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yasir al-'Arafat has proposed establishing a United Nations-monitored "buffer zone" in part of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza. THE TORONTO STAR has reported.

The U.N. peacekeeping troops would be stationed in the zone for as long as needed on the territory of "Palestine" territory, the PLO leader told the newspaper in an interview published Sunday. "I accept U.N. forces between both of us, for any period they want.... On our property. Okay? From our side," Mr. 'Arafat was quoted by the Canadian newspaper as saying.

The PLO leader envisioned creating a situation similar to that in Namibia, once administered by Pretoria, where the United Nations set up its forces for several months to allow for free elections. Namibia became independent in 1990. Mr. 'Arafat also proposed demilitarizing the zone for six months and suggested that once the Palestinian state was created, Palestinians and Jordanians would be able to vote on an eventual confederation. THE STAR reported.

In accordance with a U.N. resolution, East Jerusalem would be returned to the Palestinians and Israeli settlers would leave the occupied territories, said Mr. 'Arafat, who added that Palestinians would also be compensated for their property left behind in Israel.

The PLO chief also proposed the creation of a corridor between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and said he was prepared to have Jews, but not Zionists, in his government and would also accept that Jews who would leave Israel become Palestinian citizens.

"I accept what happened in Namibia, a transitional period under the U.N. for six months and the presence of the U.N. for a long period," Mr. 'Arafat said, adding that the U.N. peacekeepers could be placed even in areas other than the buffer zone. "No preconditions from both sides. So let's start sitting at the table. If there is a will, there is a way," he said.

He added that the United States "definitely" hold the key to getting Israel to negotiate and that he would not intervene in determining which Israelis should be a part

of the bargaining team. The PLO leader also questioned U.S. President George Bush's talk of a new world order. "Do they want to appoint the leaders of the area?" he asked, adding, "I have been elected by my people. We are proud of our democracy."

Jerusalem Radio Notes Proposal

T42503143791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew
1300 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] In an interview with the Canadian paper the TORONTO STAR, Yasir 'Arafat has said that the PLO agrees to establish a buffer zone between Israel and the Palestinian state. The proposed zone would be supervised by UN soldiers on the Palestinian side of the border. He also proposes the demilitarization of the Palestinian state for six months, and to have UN troops replace Israeli Army soldiers. Furthermore, East Jerusalem would be under Palestinian rule, the settlers would leave the territories, and Palestinians would be compensated for the property they left behind in Israel.

At the same time, 'Arafat proposes including Jews in his government. These Jews would forgo their Israeli citizenship and become Palestinian citizens. Once the Palestinian state is established, its citizens, along with those of Jordan, would vote on the question of a confederation between the two countries.

'Arafat's bureau in Tunis has distributed copies of the TORONTO STAR interview, emphasizing that these are positions to be discussed in negotiations and not preconditions.

PLO Says Remarks 'Distorted'

LD2603093891 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic
0630 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] The PLO categorically denied yesterday the 24 March reports in the Canadian TORONTO STAR purporting that the PLO had proposed a new seven-point peace plan to settle the Palestinian problem.

Authoritative sources at the PLO Central Committee told the APS correspondent in Tunis that the statements attributed to President Yasir 'Arafat in his interview with the newspaper had been distorted. The same Palestinian circles added that the campaign of distortion and misrepresentation of the Palestinian officials' statement is aimed at harming the Palestinian political stance.

It is noteworthy to recall that the TORONTO STAR pointed out that the Palestinian plan had included seven points, stipulating in particular that a buffer zone under UN supervision could be created between the independent Palestinian state and Israel.

Egypt

Mubarak Addresses Troops Returning From Gulf

NC 2603123691 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
1108 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Speech by President Hosni Mubarak to troops returning from the Gulf; at the east Cairo military air base—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Officers and troops, heroes of the Egyptian Armed Forces. O honorable soldiers who have fought in defense of principle and creed, in response to the call of Egyptian dignity, and in defense of the sacred Arab land. O returnees from the most dangerous and largest military battle that the world has known since World War II. On behalf of the Egyptian people, I greet you individually, officers and men. The Egyptian people who have followed your daring combat and your courageous assaults every day, indeed every hour, with amazement and pride, salute the soul of the martyr who gave his life to enable Egypt to live with its head high and with an unassailable dignity and perform its pioneer historic role for the sake of the Arab nation's pride and every Arab family's honor on our glorious Arab land.

I greet every soldier who was injured in this historic battle and who was a model and a splendid example of courageous assault and combat sacrifice while carrying out his national and pan-Arab duty with the best and most honorable military standards—technically, scientifically, manfully, and courageously.

I greet you, O 10 Ramadan heroes [reference to October 1973 war]. You are the vanguards of the returning Armed Forces who are coming back to the homeland on the 10 Ramadan anniversary. [applause]

Thus the date chosen for the return of the first groups coming back to the homeland was set to coincide with the most venerable occasion, the anniversary of the immortal October war which amazed the world. The world acknowledged that the Egyptian Armed Forces' performance in that war was a military miracle in accurate planning, combat will, amazing heroism, and the profound faith proceeding from the immortal call of God is great.

O heroes, you return today after recording in international military history a page of glory and light replete with lessons and additions to the science of military planning. Because the lofty goal of the immortal October war was to liberate the land and restore national dignity, the goal of the battle in which you participated with extreme courage to liberate Kuwait was to liberate a proud Arab land and deter the aggression and oppression to which all the fraternal Arab countries in the Gulf were exposed. We do not claim these immortal and shining annals, nor attribute to ourselves proud deeds that are not ours or far from us. But this is the judgment of the greatest military commanders of the superpowers in both the East and West.

This is what was put on record by military correspondents from various nationalities who witnessed your legendary fighting. They reported what they saw for themselves in the largest newspapers in the world, making it material for intensive study and analysis. These reports are an honest and true testimony with words that give everyone his rightful due. Everyone testified about the distinguished and excellent performance and magnificent combat experience in desert warfare confronting risky barriers. Everyone testified that you fought with deep faith even before the power of weapons was proven. They testified that you performed a great national and pan-Arab mission. They testified that you and your fellow hero Arab and friendly fighters achieved a most difficult and dangerous task in the liberation of Kuwait.

You all raced to reach the target in splendid military coordination and perfectly ideal planning that is considered to be a radical turning point in modern military arts in terms of both science and weapons and with extraordinary ability to define and reach targets accurately. You were not intimidated by dangerous barriers that were prepared over long months to detonate and destroy any approaching powers. You were not scared by the claims of black propaganda launched day and night from the false and deceptive radios, which threatened total annihilation of dozens of thousands. O sons, you were not intimidated by indiscriminate missiles or the fires in positions ablaze with destructive weapons. You were up to the standard in military tactics, combat and victory, sacrifice and pride. [applause]

Every honorable Arab citizen should be proud of you. It is fitting that the world military establishments should sincerely say that the Egyptians were heroes, presenting the best examples of sacrifice. It is fitting that the Kuwaiti people, who have been freed of oppression, aggression, and tyranny should receive you with throbbing hearts and elation while carrying Egyptian flags in their hands, sending out to you greetings of love, gratitude, and esteem.

O officers and men, heroes of the Egyptian Armed Forces. You are the sons and brothers of every Egyptian family. You are our bright stars that followed the pitch darkness which covered the Arab nation resulting from an historic tragedy that has been unprecedented in our long history. You are the beacon, the ever-burning beacon of victory. You are the banner of Egypt which will remain forever in the skies of the entire world. You are the impregnable shield that protected Egypt's destiny in the 10 Ramadan war and protected the Arab nation's destiny in liberating Kuwait.

The battle for the liberation of Kuwait has proven to those who cast doubts, those with biased objectives, and those with ulterior motives that Egypt is Egypt and will never be anything except Egypt. [applause] Egypt the firm and steadfast does not change color or deceive, it does not deal in slogans or decisions. Egypt is true to its word and stand. Egypt stands strong by its principles and

conviction. Egypt is proud of its national unity. Egypt upholds Arab good-neighborliness, respecting rights and duties. It upholds an Arab peace, strengthening cohesion, protecting the present, and building the future. Egypt responds with all its strength to the call of brotherhood, to protect sovereignty and freedom against the oppression of tyrants and oppressors.

With all these sublime meanings which filled our hearts, we have come to celebrate your return. You are the first contingents of those who are returning to the homeland.

I send these words from me to you, in the name of the great Egyptian people, who supported and backed the great procession of liberation. They stood by you as one man, rejecting with scorn the propaganda of deception and forgery. These words are also directed to all the heroes from the forces of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates [applause], and all the participating Arab forces, as well as the friendly forces from all parts of the world. They all carried out a noble, sublime task in defending justice, supporting legitimacy, and upholding the law. These words are also directed at every officer, soldier, and technician in our Egyptian Armed Forces which are standing in readiness to carry out their national and pan-Arab role if duty calls.

I pray God to lead us to the right decision and to inspire us with wisdom and rightness in all our steps. Think not that God does not head the deeds of those who do wrong. God is swift in calling to count. [Koranic verses] [applause]

Mubarak, Al-Asad Agree To Meet in Cairo

NC2203220491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2200 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafez al-Asad have agreed to meet in Cairo on a date to be agreed upon. Tomorrow's issue of the newspaper *AKHBAR AL-YAWM* says that the two leaders will discuss the current Arab situation, particularly the Arab security order and its connection to an overall regional security structure. Furthermore, their talks will deal with efforts under way to resolve the Palestine question and with bilateral ties within the framework of the Damascus Declaration.

Mubarak, Al-Asad Plan Summit, Bush Meeting

NC2403100491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0858 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] London, 24 Mar (MENA)—The newspaper *AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT INTERNATIONAL* today reports that Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam will pay a visit to Cairo soon and carry with him a message to President Mubarak from Syrian President Hafez al-Asad.

The paper, quoting sources it described as well-placed, adds that during his Cairo visit, Khaddam will hold talks with President Mubarak and Dr. 'Isma' 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on joint

Egyptian-Syrian diplomatic activity in the region. The same sources noted that Khaddam's visit will be a prelude to a forthcoming Egyptian-Syrian summit for further discussions on the same topic as well as on ways to promote Egyptian-Syrian relations in other fields.

The sources noted that contacts are under way to arrange for a summit between Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad and U.S. President George Bush during his upcoming visit to the region, which will include Egypt. The sources said that such a summit would examine ways of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict, particularly in light of the current U.S. efforts.

Treatment of Egyptians in Kuwait Investigated

NC2503190391 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic
1700 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Report from Cairo by correspondent Mustafa Bakri]

[Text] The Egyptian Government is holding intensive contacts with the Kuwaiti Government for reassurances about the situation of Egyptians in Kuwait. There are reports that some of them have been harassed by the Kuwaiti police force for what has been termed their cooperation with the Iraqi forces during their occupation of Kuwait. Egyptian papers continue their violent criticism of the Kuwaiti Government for its stand regarding Egyptian residents of Kuwait.

The Egyptian Government had entrusted Amin Nammar, its ambassador in Kuwait, to follow up on the situation of the Egyptians held in the border region between Iraq and Kuwait. He informed the Egyptian Government today that he visited this region. He confirmed that there are 4,400 Egyptians in a camp set up along the joint borders and that they are suffering from lack of food and medical care.

The Egyptian authorities released journalist Hamdin al-Sabahi today. He was arrested earlier for what the security authorities termed incitement by Egyptian newspapers of the demonstrations. Therefore, the Egyptian Government has so far released everyone detained for their stands on the Gulf crisis. Now, only those the authorities accused of collaborating with Iraq and attempting sabotage in the country are still held in Egyptian prisons.

Egyptians Said Detained, 'Tortured' in Kuwait

PM2003100991 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
16 Mar 91 p 1

[Wajdi Zayn-al-Din report: "Detention of 281 Egyptians at Kuwaiti Police Stations on Accusation of Supporting Invaders!"]

[Text] Kuwait—Informed sources from the Kuwaiti resistance have confirmed the detention of 221 Egyptians at police stations on charges of supporting Iraqi troops in the occupation of Kuwait on 2 August. The

sources also confirmed the detention of 60 Egyptians fleeing Iraq. The Egyptians are being tortured at the Kuwaiti police stations to force them to confess. Amin Nammar, the new Egyptian ambassador to Kuwait, has emphasized that the Egyptian Embassy is visiting the stations to reassure itself about the detained Egyptians. The Embassy is receiving those fleeing from Iraq and moving them to a camp near the Egyptian forces stationed in the al-Jahra' area for repatriation to Egypt.

Four Egyptian military aircraft have transported some 340 Egyptians fleeing Iraq. The fleeing Egyptians receive good treatment from the Egyptian troops on the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border. AL-WAFD has learned that the Egyptian forces are taking part in rescuing Egyptians on the Iraqi border. AL-WAFD spoke to some of the Egyptians detained at a police station in the Khitan area in Kuwait. The Egyptians denied that they had supported the Iraqi occupation. They emphasized that some Kuwaitis and Palestinians had reported them because of disputes with them. The Egyptians demanded that the Egyptian Government intervene to rescue them before they are sent to court.

Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah, Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, announced that some Palestinians and Egyptians would be sent for trial immediately for committing actions supporting the Iraqi invasion.

Minister Denies Kuwait 'Dispensed With' Workers

NC2303100491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0910 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Alexandria, 23 Mar (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has said that the Kuwaiti Government holds Egyptians, be they working in Kuwait or living elsewhere, in high esteem. Kuwait, however, is now experiencing unusual circumstances, he added.

In a statement after a religious symposium at the Sporting Club's mosque in Alexandria last night, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid denied reports that Kuwait has dispensed with Egyptian workers. He said such reports were not true and referred to statements by the Kuwaiti ambassador in Cairo.

'Jihad' Missile Used on Gulf War Minefields

NC2303002991 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2245 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 22 Mar (MENA)—Tomorrow's edition of AL-JUMHURIYAH reveals that Egypt came up with a military surprise in the war for the liberation of Kuwait: namely, an Egyptian missile known as "Jihad" used to cut paths through minefields.

The paper adds that the missile proved to be efficient and effective in the war for the liberation of Kuwait. The paper goes on to say that it was the product of three years of cooperation by the Egyptian Engineering Corps, the Arab Industrialization Organization, and the Armament

Organization within the armed forces. It further says that production of the missile began one month before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Scores of tests were conducted using the missile to clear passages in minefields. The Egyptian missile proved to be efficient and effective. It is capable of opening passages 18 meters deep and 130 meters long.

Iraqi Terrorists Said Aided by Jordan, PLO

PM2503112391 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic
18 Mar 91 p 1

[Imad Nasif report: "Jordan and PLO Involved With Iraq in Training Terrorists and Getting Them Into Egypt To Carry Out Sabotage"]

[Excerpt] A security source has told AL-AHRAR that investigations of the terrorists arrested recently on sabotage charges involved 65 terrorists. Investigations proved that Jordan and the PLO were directly involved in training them, facilitating their tasks, and supplying them with sophisticated explosives. Investigations of the terrorists currently detained at al-Tur Prison showed that the Iraqi regime entrusted a group of Jordanians and Palestinians with training them in Iraq. Having completed three phases of the training and become qualified to carry out terrorist actions, they traveled via Jordanian territory with their explosives and arms and were not searched at all. In this way, they managed to pass through al-Ruwayshid Port with newly-made explosives, including the types (N.T.T) "Jleiois" [previous word in English]. The terrorists handed over the explosives and maps to the Egyptian security organs. They also revealed the names of the people who were expected to facilitate their operations inside the country!!

Interior Minister Major General Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Musa ordered tight security around the places which were expected to be included in the sabotage operations. [passage omitted]

Ghali on Damascus Declaration, New Arab Order

NC2303113391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, has said that Damascus declaration signed by the Gulf states, Egypt, and Syria marked the end of one phase and the start of a new one after the recent crisis had swept the conventional wisdom aside. The main problem of previous Arab groupings, he explained, was that they dealt with theory rather than facts.

In a statement to the Cairo-based AL-MASA' today, he said no Arab order can take root until the Arab-Israeli conflict is settled.

The Damascus declaration, he said, reflects the Arab countries' determination to overcome the ordeal faced by the entire Arab order and their ability to manage their

own affairs. The declaration emphasizes that Arab existence is firm, undeniable, and capable of maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Dr. Ghali said the declaration enhances and promotes joint Arab action in accordance with the charter and resolutions of the Arab League and the Collective Arab Defense Pact. The goal is to lay the foundations for a new Arab order inside the region, he added. He said the Damascus declaration succeeded in laying the foundations on which the security arrangements for the new Arab order can be built.

Ministry Source on 'Astonishment' at Israeli Plan
NC2403150591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1349 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—A responsible source at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry has expressed astonishment at reports that the Israeli Government is planning to set up 12,000 housing units in the occupied West Bank. The source said that these reports cause amazement and astonishment because they come at a time when all peace-loving forces have joined together to advance a peaceful settlement in the Middle East leading to a lasting, comprehensive, and just peace which guarantees the brotherly Palestinian people's inalienable national rights, including their right to self-determination on their national soil, and which guarantees peace, good-neighborliness, and security for all the countries and peoples of the region.

The Egyptian source added, moreover, that these reports are entirely out of keeping with the requirements of the lasting and comprehensive peace that we are seeking to establish.

The Egyptian source also said that the continuation of Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Arab territories raises doubts about the seriousness of Israeli claims to want peace in the Middle East. The source said that the Israeli Government's continuation of its settlement activity would increase tension in the occupied Arab territories and undermine all sincere efforts to advance the peace process in the Middle East.

Concluding his comment, the Egyptian source expressed deep regret, because such Israeli practices contradict in letter and spirit the call to take confidence-building measures among the countries and peoples of the region. The source also expressed his hope that the Israeli Government would adopt policies and measures that would enhance the credibility of its position on peace.

Ghali on Mideast Peace, Ties With Turkey
TA2503202091 Ankara ANATOLIA in Turkish
1615 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo (AA)—Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, has said that Egypt is ready to cooperate with Turkey for peace and development in the region.

In a statement to ANATOLIA, Ghali said that the development of cooperation between Turkey and Egypt will further strengthen the friendship between the two countries. He described Turkish-Egyptian relations as perfect and pointed out that the governments of the two countries hold regular consultations. He said: "The aim of both countries is to strengthen regional economic cooperation, to protect peace, and to work together toward the peaceful solution of regional problems. In other words, strengthening cooperation between Turkey and Egypt, which are two countries in the same region, is far more important than strengthening cooperation between Egypt and a country in Asia or Latin America. Therefore, we believe that every common aim that will contribute to the strengthening of regional cooperation will be to the benefit of the region."

Butrus Ghali pointed out that the population explosion in the Middle East will turn the water shortage into a serious problem in the future and stressed that the public in the region must be more enlightened on the issue. The first meeting on this matter was held in Cairo last year under the title of "African waters," he said, and a second meeting on the water resources of the Middle East and Asia will be held in Istanbul in November. He pointed out that the aim of these meetings is to enlighten the governments, peoples, and international organizations on the importance of increasing cooperation for the more efficient use of water. Ghali stressed that cooperation in connection with water will strengthen peace as well.

Asked to comment on the peace waters project proposed by Turkey, Ghali said: "We support every project that will increase regional solidarity."

Ghali stated that, during the Gulf war, Egypt was opposed to the linkage of Kuwait's occupation with the Palestinian problem. However, he said, after the war, we want a peace process to be started immediately within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 242. Within this framework, Ghali said, Israel must withdraw from all Arab lands it has been occupying since 1967, as well as from south Lebanon. He stressed that Egypt wants the peace process to develop entirely within a UN framework.

Butrus Ghali said that Egypt supports the convening of an international conference with the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and all the concerned sides for the solution of the Middle East problem, but that it is also open to other proposals to be approved by the concerned sides.

Ghali stressed that there cannot be peace in the Middle East unless Syria recovers the Golan Heights under Israeli occupation.

The Egyptian state minister described his country's relations with the PLO as "normal," and said the fact that they pursued different policies during the Gulf war is not a reason to stop recognizing the PLO. "We

believe," he said, "that the Palestinian problem cannot be resolved unless the (P)LO participates in the peace process."

Answering a question on the Cyprus question, Ghali said they want the problem to be resolved peacefully, and that Turkey and Greece, which he described as "the real actors in this problem" should hold direct negotiations. He stressed that the solution of the Cyprus problem will strengthen solidarity in the region.

King Fahd Telephones Ramadan Message to Mubarak

NC2303204191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2013 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Mar (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak tonight received a telephone call from Saudi King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, in which the king congratulated President Mubarak and the Egyptian people on the start of the blessed month of Ramadan. During their telephone conversation, the two leaders also exchanged views on the developments in the Arab region.

Mubarak Sends Message to Gorbachev Via Envoy

NC2003132291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1240 GMT
20 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has sent a written message to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The message was delivered to Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Vladimir Polyakov by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director for political affairs of the president's office, during a meeting today.

The message comes within the framework of consultations and coordination between Egypt and the Soviet Union on the situation in the Gulf after the liberation of Kuwait, the current developments in the Middle East, as well as the ongoing efforts to give impetus to the peace process in the region.

Ghali Meets USSR Envoy, Stresses PLO Role

NC2103154091 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic
1500 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Text] Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, met with the Soviet ambassador in Cairo today to review developments in the Gulf and the Middle East. They also discussed the Soviet ideas to advance the peace process in the region. Ghali said that Egypt and the Soviet Union agree on the common goals of security and stability in the region and on the part that the United Nations can play in this respect. He stressed the need for the PLO's participation in the peace process.

Foreign Minister Receives Soviet Ambassador

Envoy on Mideast Peace

NC2403151791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1407 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—Soviet ambassador in Cairo Vladimir Polyakov has stressed that Security Council resolutions, whether concerning the Middle East, the Gulf, or Lebanon, must be implemented. He expressed his country's support for holding an international peace conference and for solving the Palestinian issue on the basis of Security Council Resolution 242.

The Soviet ambassador made his statement after being received today by Dr. Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, during which they reviewed developments in the Middle East and the Gulf.

Polyakov said in his statement that Moscow has put forth several ideas on achieving peace in the Middle East, and that it is awaiting a response from the parties concerned. Commenting on the Soviet stand on the Security Council resolution, which is currently under discussion, to eliminate Iraqi weapons of destruction, the ambassador said his country supports this resolution out of its concern to avoid a recurrence of what happened in the Gulf.

Message From Bessmertnykh

NC2403153491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1409 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Mar (MENA)—Dr. Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has received a message from his Soviet counterpart, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid announced this after receiving today Soviet ambassador in Cairo Vladimir Polyakov, who conveyed the message. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid did not disclose the contents of the Soviet message.

Foreign Ministry Statement on Events in Mali

NC2503153891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1358 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Cairo, 25 Mar (MENA)—The Egyptian Foreign Ministry is closely watching the development of events in Mali, stated Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, today. He said the Egyptian Embassy in Bamako is in constant contact with the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

Dr. Ghali affirmed in a statement to MENA that all of the al-Azhar envoys and Egyptian experts working in Mali are well and in good health. There have been demonstrations for many days demanding political reforms.

Mubarak Swears in Five New Governors

*NC2003120491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1050 GMT
20 Mar 91*

[Text] Cairo, 20 Mar (MENA)—Five new Egyptian governors were appointed today. They are Mahir Muhammad al-Jundi, who has been appointed as governor of Kafr al-Shaykh; Dr. Ahmad al-Juwayli, as governor of Ismailia; Counselor Mahmud Bahiy-al-Din 'Abdallah, as governor of Damietta; Muhammad Hasan Tantawi, as governor of Sawhaj; and Mustafa Ahmad Kamil, as governor of al-Daqahliyah. The new governors were sworn in before President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Soviet Messages on Gulf

*LD1803220191 Tripoli Libyan Television Network
in Arabic 2030 GMT 18 Mar 91*

[Text] The brother leader of the Great al-Fatih Revolution received two important messages from the Soviet leadership concerning the security situation in the Gulf, the future of the area after the war, and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Arab countries. This comes within the framework of continuous consultation and dialogue concerning issues of mutual interest.

JANA has learned that the appropriate quarters in the Great Jamahiriya are drafting a reply to the Soviet leadership explaining the viewpoint of the Jamahiriya on the serious outstanding issues, putting forward the contribution of the Great Jamahiriya in formulating the concept of a new world order, and reexamining the UN institutions, including a view on the UN Security Council membership, the right of veto and its uses, and asserting international legitimacy.

Al-Qadhdhafi Urged To Help Detainees in Iraq

*LD1903182191 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1615 GMT
19 Mar 91*

[Text] Tripoli, 19 March (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution has received a message from the International Commission for Solidarity with Kuwait, Cairo branch, concerning the conditions of those people detained in Iraq, which number 22,000 according to the message.

The message said: The International Commission for Solidarity with Kuwait appeals to you to intervene, for your international Arab and Islamic status, to save those detainees and to work toward their speedy release. The International Commission for Solidarity with Kuwait concluded its appeal by saying: Our hopes in your efforts are great and in your capability, even greater.

Turkish President Telephones Al-Qadhdhafi

*LD2103215891 Tripoli Libyan Television Network
in Arabic 2030 GMT 21 Mar 91*

[Text] Turkish President Turgut Ozal contacted the brother leader of the revolution by telephone. President Ozal reassured the brother leader that relations between Turkey and Iraq have returned to normal at Iraq's request. President Ozal stressed to the brother leader Turkey's readiness to repair the Khabur Bridge which was destroyed by Iraq, if Iraq wishes this. As soon as the bridge is repaired, Turkey will provide Iraq with the necessary food and humanitarian aid. The Turkish president told the brother leader that he will send his foreign minister on a visit to the Great Jamahiriya shortly.

Reportage on Turkish Foreign Minister's Visit

Arrives 22 Mar

*LD2203232691 Tripoli Libyan Television Network
in Arabic 2030 GMT 22 Mar 91*

[Text] Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin and his accompanying delegation arrived in Tripoli this evening. The guest was greeted at Tripoli International Airport by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and the Turkish ambassador to the Great Jamahiriya. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmed Alptemocin made a statement to JANA in which he expressed his great appreciation for the achievements over the years on the soil of the Great Jamahiriya thanks to the Great al-Fatih Revolution and its leader, Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi. He added: We, in Turkey, follow with pride the Great Jamahiriya's development, stressing his country's desire to bolster relations and hold continued consultations, particularly after the recent events.

He pointed out that his visit will be an opportunity to continue talks and exchange views on all matters concerning the two fraternal countries, adding: We will be working to consolidate our relations in accordance with the current development being witnessed in the region and will do our utmost to bolster such relations, a matter entrusted to me by the Turkish president of the Republic, who received me before embarking on this visit and asked me to convey his greetings to the leader of the revolution and the people of Libya on the occasion of the blessed month of Ramadan.

The Turkish foreign minister pointed out in his statement that he will be using his visit to the Great Jamahiriya as an opportunity to study the developments in the region and ways to deal with them in the future to affirm international peace and security in this region.

Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD2303092191 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab
Homeland in Arabic 0300 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] The brother leader of the revolution yesterday received Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin, the envoy of Turkish President Turgut Ozal.

The Turkish minister gave the brother leader of the revolution a comprehensive explanation of the Turkish Government's position toward the Kuwait crisis and the Gulf war. He pointed out that Turkey has no aggressive intentions towards Iraq, and that all that Turkey had done was merely to participate in the implementation of Security Council resolutions.

The Turkish minister also pointed out to the brother leader of the revolution Turkey's readiness to develop its relations with the Arab homeland and the Great Jamahiriyyah, and expressed readiness to discuss in a brotherly manner any mistakes that might have been made. He praised the important role played by the brother leader of the revolution in consolidating international peace and security. The audience was attended by the brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and Turkey's ambassador to the Great Jamahiriyyah.

Received by Foreign Minister

LD2303201191 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1740 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Mar (JANA)—The brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for External Liaison and International Cooperation conferred this afternoon with Ahmet Kurtcebe Alptemocin, the Turkish foreign minister, who is paying a visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah.

The meeting was an opportunity to examine means for bolstering and developing the two fraternal countries' relations in a manner that would contribute to the creation of exemplary cooperation in the service of common interests, in implementing joint agreements and ventures, and in consolidating bonds in cultural, economic, social, and scientific spheres.

At the meeting, they also exchanged viewpoints on a number of international topics of common interest in the aftermath of the Kuwaiti crisis and the Gulf war and their repercussions on the region.

Makes Statement, Departs

LD2503221691 Tripoli JANA in English 1423 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Apr JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The Minister of Foreign Affairs in Turkey Ahmet Alptemocin, left Tripoli on Sunday afternoon at the end of a three-day visit to great Jamahiriyyah. The Turkish minister made a statement to JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY in which he confirmed that his visit to

Great Jamahiriyyah was excellent, and views were exchanged in various fields of cooperation between the two countries and issues of joint interest. He said that Turkey was in constant contact with Great Jamahiriyyah for consultations on the problems concerning the region, especially after the Kuwaiti crisis.

The minister re-affirmed his country's desire to establish excellent relations with its neighbors. He stressed the significance and special consideration given to Libyan-Arab-Turkish relations, according to the prominent position held by the Turkish people to Great Jamahiriyyah. [sentence as received] He added that the meetings which were held here confirmed the two countries common desire to develop bilateral relations and to intensify the co-operation scopes in all areas.

Jordan's Husayn, Al-Qadhdhafi Urge Arab Unity

LD1903212691 Tripoli Libyan Television Network
in Arabic 2030 GMT 19 Mar 91

[Text] A telephone conversation has taken place between the brother leader of the revolution and King Husayn of Jordan concerning the unity of the Arab League, the need to unify [tawhid] its headquarters, the importance of all Arab countries' attendance at the 75th session of the League, and the ending of the rift in the League which came about after the emergency summit conference held in Cairo. Great concern was expressed over the continuing deployment of international forces inside Iraqi territory and their interference in Iraq's internal affairs, and over the fact that the Arab nation will not tolerate the situation represented by the deployment of international forces in the Arab territory.

Reportage on Jordanian Foreign Minister Visit**Arrives, Makes Statement**

LD2003204591 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab
Homeland in Arabic 1715 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Brother Tahir al-Masri, foreign minister of sister Jordan, arrived in Tripoli this evening on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah. He was met at Tripoli International Airport by the brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation.

After his arrival, the minister made this statement to JANA: I am paying this visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah in response to the invitation extended to me by the brother leader to unite the ranks of the Arab nation (?to enable it) to confront the dangers and challenges facing it.

He added that he highly values the continuous efforts made by the brother leader of the revolution to heal the rift within the Arab League. He also indicated that his visit comes within the framework of a tour of the Arab Maghreb Union aimed at coordinating positions and uniting our efforts because, he went on to say, the next phase is a serious and important one in our life; therefore

consultations should be held at the highest level and continuously. He also said that he is glad to visit the Great Jamahiriyyah, the fraternal Arab country which always stands in the forefront of those who defend the rights and causes of the Arab nation and which continuously calls for Arab solidarity.

With regard to the relations between the Great Jamahiriyyah and sister Jordan, brother Tahir al-Masri said that they are excellent. About the Arab future after the Gulf war, the Jordanian foreign minister stated that the future of the region is in our hands and it can be bright if we behave properly and if we unite our efforts and use our resources in the interest of the Arab nation.

Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD2103180491 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1653 GMT
21 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, 21 Mar (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution today received the Jordanian foreign minister, Brother Tahir al-Misri, who is currently visiting the Great Jamahiriyyah.

The meeting was attended by the brother secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation and the ambassador of Jordan to the Great Jamahiriyyah.

Concludes Visit, Departs

LD2303181691 Tripoli Domestic Service in Arabic
1600 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Text] Brother Tahir al-Masri, foreign minister of fraternal Jordan, left Tripoli this morning after his visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah. In a statement to JANA, Brother Tahir al-Masri praised the results of his visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah and affirmed that the Great Jamahiriyyah and Jordan agreed on the issues discussed at the meetings. Brother Tahir al-Masri affirmed that this visit opened great prospects for bilateral action between the two fraternal countries and Arab common action for the forthcoming period. He mentioned that Jordan always aspired to cooperation with the Great Jamahiriyyah, particularly in the forthcoming period, which is an important and dangerous phase, and Arab efforts must be united to spare harm to our Arab nation and to unite our ranks.

Al-Qadhdhafi, Al-Asad Discuss Arab League

LD2203074591 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab
Homeland in Arabic 0115 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] A telephone contact took place between the brother leader of the revolution and President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the republic in sisterly Syria. The conversation concerned the current Arab situation, the unification of the Arab League's headquarters, and the need for the participation of all member states in the 95th meeting of the Arab League.

Egyptian Information Minister Arrives for Talks

LD2403175491 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1525 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli 24 Mar (JANA)—Dr. Safwat al-Sharif, minister of information in fraternal Egypt, and his accompanying delegation arrived in Tripoli this afternoon on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyyah. The brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Information and Culture greeted him upon his arrival.

Dr. Safwat al-Sharif hailed the brother leader of the revolution's efforts, his call to rally the ranks of the Arab League, and the need to have one headquarters for it. He added in a statement to JANA that the call of the leader Mu'amar al-Qadhdhafi should make every Arab official and citizen happy. It will have an effect and a role to play, and it is fully in harmony with the Egyptian stance calling for the need to heal the rift and establish solidarity.

He added that the Arab nation is able to make strides along this path and jettison whatever it sees as negative during the next few months because the challenge is great and we should learn truth from the hard facts. He stressed that the brother leader of the revolution's call, which falls within such a framework, has had a clear effect as Arab foreign ministers will be convening their meeting in Cairo tomorrow with the presence of most Arab countries if not all of them.

Dr. Safwat al-Sharif praised the balance brought to Libyan Arab-Egyptian relations, stressing that such relations are now above any comment because they are solid.

He went on to say: My presence here today comes within the framework of the permanent consultations between President Mubarak and the brother leader of the revolution, consultations which have never ceased whenever there is something that warrants consultation between them and exchanges of views on whatever is of interest to the Arab nation.

He affirmed that the future and the security of the region are in the hands of the Arab nation as a whole. There should be only Arab solutions. No one should impose anything upon the Arab nation. The latter has solely a sovereign right to make decisions on its own soil.

Received by Al-Qadhdhafi

LD2503164491 Tripoli JANA in English 1416 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Al Rabie [March], JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The leader of the revolution received Dr. Safwat al-Sharif the Egyptian minister of information and the assistant secretary of the National Party in the Arab Republic of Egypt, and an accompanying delegation.

The reception was attended by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Information and Culture, and the coordinator of Arab Libyan-Egyptian relations in Cairo.

Al-Qadhdhafi Gets Support Letter From Al-Bashir

LD2503222391 Tripoli JANA in English 1440 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tripoli, April 25, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Col. Abu-Bakr Yunis Jabir received 'Abd-al-Rahman Mahmud Hamdi the minister of finance and economy in Sudan who handed him a letter to the leader of the revolution from Lt. Gen. 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir the president of the Revolutionary Command Council in sisterly Sudan. In his letter, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir expressed great appreciation and respect to the genuine Arab stances assumed by the leader towards the Arab people of Sudan and its revolution. He said "we are proud in the growing fraternal relations binding the sons of the one Arab people in Great Jamahiriya and Sudan and we are assured about the integration steps which are speeding up with your blessing towards full unity with Allah's permission".

Mauritania

Taya Appeals for 'Spirit of Tolerance'

AB1703180891 Dakar PANA in English 1523 GMT
17 Mar 91

[Text] Dakar, 17 March (Pool-NA/PANA)—Mauritanian president, Col. Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya on Saturday appealed to his countrymen to embrace the spirit of tolerance, fraternity and solidarity during the month of Ramadan which started in Mauritania Sunday.

In a brief message on Radio Mauritania, Taya also appealed to them to make more sacrifices and to exercise self-denial in order to cope with the prevailing world crises. According to him, the battle against the different challenges, including that of underdevelopment, calls for increased efforts and unity of purpose.

FLAM Opposition Leader Advocates Federalism

AB2303202891 Paris AFP in French 1642 GMT
20 Mar 91

[Text] Dakar, 20 Mar (AFP)—The president of the African Liberation Forces of Mauritania (FLAM—armed opposition movement to the Nouakchott regime) in an exclusive interview granted to AFP in Dakar, preferring to remain anonymous, has proposed federalism for Mauritania.

FLAM, which supports the cause of black African agitations against Arab domination in the country, has attracted attention since 1986 with the writing of a "Manifesto of the Oppressed Black Mauritanian" which

landed its authors in prison. Two (including the writer Tene Youssouph Guye) died in detention. FLAM was also accused in 1987 of instigating "a black African plot" which ended in the sentencing to death and subsequently execution of three officers and the imprisonment—for life in some cases—of 40 people, including two soldiers who died in detention at Oualatta Prison.

The FLAM president, whose whereabouts are completely clandestine both in Mauritania and in other countries, stressed that the federal option for Mauritania was adopted during a recent congress of the movement which is said to have been held in a secret place from 8 to 9 January 1991. He feels that this is the "only alternative to a viable national unity. Contrary to government propaganda, we are not anti-Arab racists. We believe that there should be a place for everyone, including us, in Mauritania," the FLAM president added. The political leader severely criticized the Nouakchott regime which he accused of wanting "at all cost to proclaim Mauritania's Arabness," stressing that the black African Mauritanian population—especially those who speak Pulaar and Soninke—represent 40 percent of the country's population.

He added that real power is in the hands of Arab Berbers. He pointed out certain "discriminations such as granting bank loans to only one group or systematically using the Arabic language in studies, which automatically eliminates non-Arab speaking people from the mainstream of government and administration."

According to him, one of the paradoxes of this policy is that the Mauritanian head of state recently started reading all his speeches in Arabic even though it is well known that Colonel Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya does not usually speak Arabic. The FLAM president, who travels clandestinely, said he was disappointed that the Francophone world should abandon the black Mauritians, the only ones who continue to maintain the French language in an officially bilingual state. "France has abandoned the non-Arabic part of Mauritania," he deplored.

Furthermore, he attributed the recent release in Mauritania of detainees convicted for treason (including 33 black Mauritians) to "French pressure." He said people who have still not been tried for the plot denounced by the government last November should be compensated and receive amnesty and reinstated into their places of work.

The Mauritanian opposition leader also set the same preconditions for the return of any Mauritanian refugees expelled to Senegal during the conflict between the countries in April 1989. Some 60,000 Mauritians, all black Mauritians, were expelled to Senegal. FLAM continues its armed struggle, but it has been a victim of Senegal's desire to restore good relations with Mauritania, the president stated.

Morocco

Party Leaders Comment on Gulf, Europe Problems

LD2003224291 Paris International Service in French
1230 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Our guest is Abderrahim Bouabid, secretary general of the USFP, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, the Moroccan Socialist Party. Farida Moha questioned him on the telephone. The first question posed by Farida Moha: The Gulf war and the various problems revealed the existing gap between Europe and the Maghreb. Could we overcome now what was presented as a psychological rupture? Here is Abderrahim Bouabid:

[Begin recording] [Bouabid] There was a psychological rupture between the Western countries and naturally, the United States on the one hand, and the Maghreb countries on the other. The Gulf war had a very important impact all over North Africa, on Morocco in particular. The Arab countries concerned should be made partners in this dialogue.

[Moha] Before the extraordinary session of the French Parliament, Michel Rocard spoke of the necessity of democracy, which is the only possible way to achieve justice. On the eve of the legislative elections in Algeria—and also elections in Morocco in a few months—do you think that the Maghreb is evolving towards democracy?

[Bouabid] Yes, we do. In Morocco, in any case, we are exerting every possible effort to evolve toward democracy. Democracy does not come from abroad. Democracy is an internal struggle, it is a full awareness; and this awareness must be entrenched. Well, in Morocco and in Algeria, I think, we support the institution of a democracy that might falter at the beginning, but democracy would have been chosen anyway. In Morocco, the king in his recent speech promised free elections; that is, without the intervention of the administration. So, we count on this opening to have a true parliament and a true government with the power to take decisions.

[Moha] Do you think that the Gulf war served to reveal all the frustrations and the lack of democracy in the Maghreb countries?

[Bouabid] Yes, it revealed all the frustrations among nations. The Arabs, chiefly, felt and still feel this absolutely deep frustration which consists in the occupation of their land by the Israelis. So, this is why, as a reply to Prime Minister Michel Rocard, we say yes to democracy. This is what we are doing and this is what we want, but it is not enough to have democratic regimes, democracy must also intervene in this new system of international order in the Gulf region which has been put to the test during the past weeks. We are sure that if we tackle the main issues, that of Palestine and relations between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and if the Americans, who are now leading this new world order, yes, if the Americans make an effort to solve an essential problem, that

of Palestine and the Palestinian people, then many other problems will de facto be solved or be on their way to being solved.

There is one other thing as well, on which the Arab and Islamic world is very sensitive. The Arab and Islamic world is watching the Americans' and the allies' attitude regarding the respect of Iraqi territorial integrity. The Iraqi people are seeking a way through democracy and justice. If Iraq is sliced up, however, or if its territorial integrity is affected, then this will lead to a further complication of problems related to the Gulf situation, and indirectly to the problems in relations between the Maghreb and West Europe.

[Moha] Precisely, Mr. Abderrahim, by appealing for dialogue with the Maghreb, the French prime minister stressed the idea of the closeness of destiny. What are the means by which France and Europe can help the Maghreb?

[Bouabid] Obviously, there are economic and commercial links, as well as the existing cultural links. We consider, however, that Europe turned its back a little on us. With regard to economic relations, we are a developing country, and if we do not have export facilities, we will not have import facilities of manufactured goods, or technology, or any other assistance. So, the barriers surrounding the Common Market must absolutely be further opened to our products.

[Moha] Yes, and the market of ideas also?

[Bouabid] Yes, if the barriers are opened, the market of ideas is also open. Consequently, we know on both sides the importance of this market of ideas. [end recording]

King Issues Orders Providing Work for Youth

LD2603082791 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic
0700 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] King Hassan II chaired a working meeting at the Royal Court yesterday devoted to discussion of the results of the first session of the National Council for Youth and the Future. The meeting was attended by chairman of the first session of the National Council for Youth and the Future [NCYF] Abdellatif Laraki; the Council's Secretary General Habib Malki; Prime Minister Azzedine Laraki; Minister of State Moulay Ahmed Alaoui; Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali; Minister of the Interior and Information Driss Basri; Minister of Labor Hassan Abbadi; and Minister Delegate to the Prime Minister Rachdi Ghazouani.

During the meeting, Abdellatif Laraki and Habib Malki submitted a report to King Hassan II on the results of the first session of the NCYF. After taking cognizance of these results, the king discussed them with members of the Council and decided with them on the urgent measures that should be implemented to involve youth in the active life of the country.

Thus upon the royal orders of King Hassan II, a plan of action consisting of 21 measures was adopted aimed at utilizing investment in work places and bolstering employment contracts.

The king issued his royal orders for beginning, on 15 April, an operation to provide work for 100,000 youth with baccalaureat or proficiency certificates or technical diplomas. The operation will be implemented in two stages: the first continuing until the end of August, with the second covering the period from 1 August to the end of the current year.

Thus the participation of local communities in this operation will be assured through the creation of 37,000 new jobs, of which 22,000 will be created in the first stage. Each of the private and public sectors will contribute 24,000 jobs. Fifteen thousand youth will continue their studies or perform their civil service [al-Khidmat al-Madaniyah].

The king also issued his royal orders providing for joint action by the government and the NCYF to find ways to implement the 21 measures proposed by the Council and the seven royal decrees pertaining to the implementation of the consultative program.

Afterward, the king issued his royal orders for restructuring the Ministry of Labor to make it capable of keeping abreast with the needs for involving youth in the active life of the country.

In conclusion, Rachdi Ghazouani presented the king with a copy of his book *Toward a Strategy based on Labor and Basic Commodities in Morocco*. The introduction to the book was written by Minister of the Interior and Information Driss Basri.

Sudan

SPLA Rebels Claim Control Over Maridi

EA2203144891 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] [martial music] The SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] has scored its biggest victory of the year 1991. [martial music] Another strategic and vital garrison town in Western Equatoria has fallen to the SPLA. [martial music]

Here now is the news in detail. The combined forces of commandos and national mobile task forces last night, 21 March 1991, overran in a storm attack the Army garrison of Maridi, the main enemy garrison in Western Equatoria and headquarters of the 16th Independent Brigade, after three weeks of tactical and heavy fighting. SPLA forces are now in complete and firm control of Maridi Army Garrison, Maridi town, and all the nine brigade outstations of (Comboni), Maridi two, (Jabal Mufattish), (Tawtin), PDU [expansion unknown], the

dam, (Mboroko), (Jitek), and the institute. Most of the enemy's 16th Brigade of about 3,000 troops have been destroyed. [martial music]

Maridi Seizure Praised

EA2303105291 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Let those who beat the drums of war in Khartoum without [words indistinct] to war be here informed that SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] has taken Maridi by storm, a garrison the junta had vowed openly over the media that the SPLA would not take. Well, the SPLA has taken it. How about that?

'Umar al-Bashir, like the clique rulers before him, has been rudely awakened by yet another bigger SPLA victory. The SPLA has given 'Umar al-Bashir a nasty slap in the face as a present to the Sudanese people on the sixth anniversary of the glorious 1985 March-April popular uprising. [martial music]

The capture of Maridi makes a mockery of 'Umar al-Bashir's fake victories which he claims to have achieved in Upper Nile. Maridi is a real and a strategic military victory and all know that the SPLA has stood firm and made good its promises. Let all those soldiers who are hopefully put on convoys be warned once more that they are being sent to certain death. The SPLA, through its underground cell, has full details of the convoys that the junta was preparing in Juba and Wau to rescue Maridi. With the fall of Maridi, these convoys are now missions to nowhere.

The whole thing is a plot by the National Islamic Front [NIF] junta to destroy the Sudanese Army and replace it with the NIF army known as the Popular Defense Forces. There were 3,000 troops in Maridi. These were occupying prepared defensive positions, yet the SPLA took this biggest of garrisons and destroyed or dispersed the 3,000 troops. The SPLA is fully prepared to destroy any adventurous convoy moving from Juba or from Wau, and we strongly urge soldiers to refuse such deadly missions. Convoys of 3,000 troops will be much more vulnerable to the SPLA than the 3,000-man defensive garrison of the entrenched troops in Maridi. We urge soldiers in Juba and Wau to take this advice and warnings with dead seriousness.

SPLA Claims Control of Western Equatoria

EA2503195291 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] takes another two garrison towns in Western Equatoria and completes the total liberation of Western Equatoria Province, and 'Umar al-Bashir now does not control a single inch of Western Equatoria. [martial music]

In their continuing drive, SPLA forces in Bright Star Campaign, phase three, Sector Two, captured last Saturday, 23 March 1991, the army garrisons of Mundri and Ieri only 48 hours after the fall of Maridi.

SPLA forces in the area continue to move with maximum violence, and the Bright Star Campaign commander here warns in the most blunt and strongest of terms that attacks on Yei, Juba, Terakeka, Rumbek, and Wau are imminent. The Bright Star Campaign Phase Three forces are running out of garrison towns to capture and those in Yei, Juba, Terakeka, Rumbek, and Wau should have no reason to doubt or take this warning lightly. There is nothing to prevent us and there is no reason why these towns should not be attacked and captured and the Bright Star Campaign forces are fully prepared. Soldiers in Yei, Juba, Terakeka, Rumbek, and Wau, we advise and urge you: do not be like those of Maridi. Take this warning seriously. The Bright Star Campaign is very, very serious. [martial music]

Commanders on Equatoria, Bahr Al-Ghazal Situation

EA2503175791 Khartoum National Unity Radio
in Arabic 1515 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Staff Brigadier Babikir 'Abd al-Mahmud, commander of the Popular Defence Forces [PDF], has said that it was created to aid our Armed Forces. He said the PDF has participated in military operations with our Armed Forces in Equatoria, Bahr al-Ghazal, and the Nubah mountains. He said the PDF had burned the outlaws' camps, captured and taken as POW's more than 500 outlaws, and seized a great quantity of ammunition. He said that all youth aged 16 to 70 [as heard] will be trained and that after five years, everyone in Sudan will know how to handle a gun.

[Khartoum National Unity Radio in Arabic at 1525 GMT on 24 March adds: "Staff Major General Hashim Muhammad Hasan, commander of Bahr al-Ghazal military region, has said that the security situation in the State of Bahr al-Ghazal is satisfactory and that our Armed Forces are recapturing every place in the State of Wau. He said that the existing federal system is the best one because it means all the masses will participate in government; he also said that this system did not previously exist. He reiterated that the relief supplies for the State of Wau were reaching it by land."]

Armed Forces Open Up Roads Around Juba

EA2103205691 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1050 GMT
21 Mar 91

[Text] Khartoum, 21 Mar (SUNA)—Major General Nasr al-Din Sulayman, Equatoria military zone commander, has stated that the Armed Forces have succeeded in mopping up [words indistinct] and opening up roads around Juba town within a diameter of (?six miles) [words indistinct] around Juba town, and that the Armed Forces control all the entrances that the outlaws used to pass through. The Equatoria military zone commander said that good provisions, the

Armed Forces' experience in mopping-up operations, and the new method of military planning, as well as the support of the friendly and popular defense forces, contributed immensely to defeating the rebel movement in Equatoria.

In a statement to the daily AL-INQADH AL-WATANI issued here today, the commander said that the liberation of Yei town and (?return to) Juba by the Armed Forces, despite the outlaws' great numbers and efficient equipment, reaffirms the Armed Forces' (?ability) to crush the rebel movement and uproot [words indistinct], and this may well serve as a message to the rebel leader and his supporters to review their calculations and lay down their arms.

Al-Bashir Hails Armed Forces' Activities

EA2203103291 Omdurman Domestic Service in Arabic
0430 GMT 21 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, Revolution Command Council and Ministerial Council chairman, has stated that the Popular Defense Forces have confirmed their effectiveness in military operations, particularly in the (?southern) areas. His excellency, in a regular meeting with newspaper editors and the director of the SUDANESE NEWS AGENCY, yesterday, at the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers, commended the position of the Popular Defense Forces in Bahr al-Ghazal State, where the forces, supported by one regiment of the Armed Forces, succeeded in destroying a number of the outlaws' camps, and seizing a large quantity of arms, ammunition, and equipment. [passage omitted]

Government Expels Two Ethiopian Diplomats

EA2503211091 Khartoum National Unity Radio
in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The Sudanese Government has decided to expel as persona non grata two Ethiopian diplomats working at the Ethiopian Embassy in Khartoum. This is in response to the Ethiopian Government's expulsion two days ago of two Sudanese diplomats at the Sudanese Embassy in Addis Ababa. Mr. Teklu Tabor, Ethiopian ambassador to Sudan, was summoned yesterday to the Foreign Ministry and notified by Ja'far Abu Hajj, under-secretary of the Foreign Ministry, of the Sudanese decision to expel the Ethiopian diplomats, who are to leave the country within four days from today. [passage omitted] The Ethiopian diplomats being expelled are of the rank of first secretary. They are: Tesfaye Tadesse and Sahhilobit Berek.

Opposition Parties Debate Transitional Plans

PM1903145991 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 13 Mar 91 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Sudanese Opposition Groups Meet in Ethiopia To Discuss Shape of Transitional Rule"]

[Text] Sudanese opposition groups and parties yesterday started an enlarged meeting in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, to discuss the escalation of opposition and draw up a joint program for rule in any future transitional period.

Participating in that meeting are all the major parties and the Garang movement, with Mubarak al-Fadil al-Mahdi representing the 'Ummah Party, Muhammad al-Hasan 'Abdallah Yasir representing the Democratic Unionist Party, Dr. Lam Akol representing the Garang movement, Al-Tajani al-Tayyib and Dr. 'Izz-al-Din 'Ali 'Amir representing the Communist Party, and Lieutenant General Fathi Ahmad 'Ali and Lieutenant 'Abd-al-Rahman Sa'id representing the "legitimate command" of the Sudanese Armed Forces.

The Sudanese Government yesterday summoned the Ethiopian ambassador in Khartoum and conveyed to him its protest at the opposition groups' meeting.

Meanwhile, Sudanese Information Minister 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the coming few days will witness large-scale changes in the media organs, especially government newspapers, radio, television, the SUDANESE NEWS AGENCY, and the Central Distribution House, which will be turned into a trading establishment.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the posts of undersecretary at the Information Ministry will be abolished under the proposed new system. They will be replaced by the posts of "secretaries" for coordination among the authorities, to be formed to run the media organs.

Opposition Groupings Agree on Action Program

PM2503110991 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 21 Mar 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Sudanese Opposition Decides To Step Up Its Activities"]

[Text] Addis Ababa, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—After five days of meetings, the Democratic National Grouping [DNG], which comprises the Sudanese opposition parties, the unions, the Garang movement, and representatives from the Armed Forces and regular forces, has adopted an action program to topple the regime of Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir.

In a statement issued after its meetings, which were surrounded by the utmost secrecy, the DNG said that details of the action program for toppling the military government in Khartoum were discussed and agreed. Although the statement referred to action to topple the regime by "all means" and restore the multiparty democratic system, informed sources in the Sudanese opposition parties told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the agreed action program does not include the use of

violence. The DNG pledged to stop the seven-year civil war in Sudan "once the present regime has been toppled."

The statement indicated that details of resolving the famine catastrophe in Sudan were discussed, as were details of the program of the transitional government that will take over once the present military regime has been destroyed. A unified DNG charter document was issued in the light of the amendments submitted by the [Sudanese] People's [Liberation] Movement [SPLM] and the [Sudanese] People's Liberation Army, which were endorsed last March.

The meetings, held in Addis Ababa 15-19 March, were attended by delegations from the SPLM, the legitimate command of the Armed Forces, the 'Ummah Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, the Sudanese Communist Party, and the Sudanese African Congress, in addition to nationalist figures.

Regarding the details of the program of the transitional government that will succeed the present regime, the meeting dealt with issues of a constitution, a structure of government, organization of political and social life, details of economic programs in the transitional period, foreign policy, and regional and international cooperation.

The meeting emphasized that the democratic option based on the people's sovereignty and pluralism is the path chosen by the Sudanese people. The participants agreed to draft a constitutional document for the transitional period stipulated in the DNG's charter—a document that guarantees the rule of law, basic freedoms, democracy, pluralism, and religious freedom within the framework of democratic, constitutional institutions, regardless of religion, color, or race. This is in addition to all other human rights, including those concerning fair distribution of wealth.

The participants agreed on the basic guidelines for a constitution, public laws, and government structures based on a presidential council, a legislative national assembly, and a council of ministers. They also agreed on convening the constitutional conference and on the foundations for organizing political and social life.

At the head of these basic guidelines for the constitution and the laws are: the abolition of the September 1983 laws and all the laws restricting freedoms; separation of legislative, executive, and judicial branches; judicial independence; guaranteeing the right to form political and unionist organizations and publish newspapers; securing a national character for the Armed Forces and the regular forces; and bringing to trial anyone who caused, planned, or participated in the undermining of the democratic system that existed until 29 June 1989 or helped the putschist regime to continue.

Regarding the economy, the participants agreed to restructure the Sudanese economy and follow development plans that will restore its balance by eliminating the

colonialist tradition of sending exports at the expense of the peoples' essential needs and concentrating development in the center of the country, ignoring Sudan's other provinces. The participants also emphasized the need to eliminate the effects of unbalanced development by remedying the unequal development between the modern and traditional sectors and between the urban and rural sectors and by redistributing the wealth among the people living in the rural area, who constitute the majority of the Sudanese people.

The participants also emphasized the need for self-reliance, on the grounds that it is the cornerstone of economic policy at the transitional stage.

With regard to urgent needs, the participants agreed to take decisive measures to eliminate the distortion inflicted on the Sudanese economy by the Islamic Front regime, to destroy the phenomenon of plundering public funds and national resources and to call to account anyone involved in that, and to use diplomacy to find quick solutions to the foreign debt problem in accordance with the proposed international and regional plans and the country's capabilities.

With regard to foreign policy, the participants agreed to pursue a foreign policy based on independent Sudanese decisionmaking, national sovereignty, common interests, good-neighborliness, nonalignment, rejection of blocs, respect for international charters, effective participation in regional and international organizations, support for liberation issues, opposition to Zionism and racism—a policy that utilizes diplomacy to work for peace, rebuild Sudan, build the destroyed bridges of trust with brothers, friends, and the international community, and establish an able diplomatic corps reflecting the diversity in Sudan.

The participants also discussed the conspicuous deterioration in economic and social conditions and the military government's policies that have led to the worsening of the famine in a number of Sudan's provinces and endangered the lives of 9 million Sudanese citizens. The participants emphasized that the government's failure to reveal the realities of the famine and its refusal to receive foreign aid is a human crime whose perpetrators should be punished by law, as it is a crime of mass annihilation.

The participants issued a separate statement on the famine in Sudan. The participants sent a message to Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, congratulating him on the liberation of Kuwait and the restoration of constitutional legitimacy and condemning the al-Bashir Government's position, which they described as opportunist. They called on him to differentiate between the al-Bashir regime's position and that of the Sudanese people, who condemned the invasion and supported international legitimacy. It was decided to send messages to the leaders of Ethiopia, the host state, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the Gulf states, and Libya. It was also decided that delegations from the DNG will visit a number of neighboring states and the Gulf states to clarify the DNG's

aims and program and to consult on issues concerning the Sudanese working in these countries and issues of common interest. It was also decided to hold another meeting, whose date and venue were agreed, to follow up the implementation of this meeting's resolutions.

Former Army Commander on Opposition to Al-Bashir

*PM1903164591 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
13-19 Mar 91 p 42*

[Unattributed report: "Former Commander of Sudanese Armed Forces Tells AL-MAJALLAH: We Seek To Hand Over Power to Legitimate Leadership"]

[Text] General Fathi Ahmad 'Ali, former commander in chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, has emphasized that the "Ana al-Sudan" organization represents the military wing of the Democratic National Grouping comprising all the Sudanese parties and unions whose aim is to restore legitimate government to Sudan and topple the present al-Bashir government, using all means to remove the present regime, bring about peace, and establish a democratic system acceptable to the Sudanese people.

Gen. Fathi Ahmad 'Ali added that the present regime is currently facing numerous problems, thus its removal from power is merely a matter of time, because it has proved its precipitous failure in all internal and external issues. It has also displayed its blatant hostility to peace, the Arab nation, and the international community. Therefore, it will not remain in power for long.

He denied that the "Ana al-Sudan" organization receives any foreign military aid from Arab or European states. He said: We have not sought any, but we will need that aid after the removal of the present regime to build strong national armed forces to protect the country and the democratic system.

Gen. Fathi Ahmad 'Ali confirmed that there has been an alliance with the Garang organization since the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement signed the Democratic National Grouping's charter, that there is an exchange of important and vital information about present conditions among the al-Bashir forces' ranks, and that that cooperation aims primarily at undermining the al-Bashir government.

Finally, the former commander of the Sudanese Armed Forces confirmed the participation of the legitimate leadership opposed to the al-Bashir regime in planning and implementing the four attempted coups experienced by the present government since the 30 June coup.

Delegation To Mediate Between Somali Groups

*E42503215291 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1040 GMT
25 Mar 91*

[Text] Khartoum, 25 Mar (SUNA)—Mr. 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad, the minister of culture and information, left yesterday for a tour of Yemen, Djibouti, and

Somalia, leading a high-level political delegation to mediate between the groups struggling for power in Somalia which recently toppled President Siad Barre.

Mr. 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad, the minister of information, told AL-QUWWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH that the mediation being undertaken by Sudan stemmed from its concern over (the deterioration) of the situation in Somalia, as well as in response to appeals addressed to it by some of the patriotic groups to work to settle the ongoing conflict there.

His excellency said the tour would begin with Yemen to discuss the issue with Yemeni officials who play an important role in the stability and security of Somalia. The political delegation would also meet officials in Djibouti to discuss the issue of finding peaceful solutions to the continuing power struggle in Somalia. The minister said the mediation in Somalia would be between the parties to the conflict. Sudan and the political delegation which would undertake the mediation had good, established, and historical relations with those groups.

The minister expressed the hope that the Sudanese delegation would play a role in achieving peace, security, and stability in Somalia and that the conflicting parties would work for unity in the face of the challenges before them.

It is worth mentioning that the Somali opposition forces seized power last month, but split into groups and continued to struggle for power.

Tunisia

Envoy in Cairo To Attend Arab League Meetings

NC2203214291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2050 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Text] Tunis, 22 Mar (MENA)—Diplomatic sources have said that Tunisia will take part in meetings of the Arab League's ordinary session due to be held in Cairo on 30 March.

Tunisian ambassador in Cairo Abdelhamid Ammar will represent Tunisia in the meetings of this session which will be held on the level of the permanent representatives, as Tunisia has not thus far appointed its permanent representative to the General Secretariat of the Arab League since the League departments moved to Cairo on 21 December.

Meetings of this [word indistinct] session by the Arab League Council will be the first to be held at the permanent representatives' level in Cairo since the General Secretariat was transferred to Cairo.

As'ad al-As'ad, Arab League acting secretary general, said yesterday that 16 Arab League member states had informed the General Secretariat of their intention to participate in the next session of the Arab League Council. [Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1234 GMT on 21 March lists

these countries as: Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Somalia, Djibouti, Palestine, Morocco, Libya, Algeria, Mauritania, and the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries.]

Religious Figure Says Nationals To Perform Hajj

LD2403062291 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0025 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Tunis, 23 Mar (SPA)—A Tunisian official has hailed the great and ever-growing projects being realized by the government of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, in holy Mecca and Medina and holy rites' places to serve God's guests. [passage omitted]

Dr. 'Ali Chebi, Tunisian secretary of state for religious affairs, asserted in his statement to SPA that Tunisian citizens will perform this year's pilgrimage. He added: "We in the Secretariat of State have carried out the necessary measures to perform the pilgrimage; we have invited people to register."

The Tunisian secretary of state for religious affairs pointedly asserted his country's commitment to the quotas proportionally allocated to each Islamic state in accordance with its population. Dr. 'Ali Chebi replied to allegations on the pilgrimage, saying: "All Tunisian strata, from the highest ranking official to the ordinary citizen, are looking forward to the pilgrimage."

Reportage on Jordanian Foreign Minister's Visit

Talks With Ben Yahya

LD2503142191 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The Palestinian question and developments in Iraq were the main topics of discussion during talks held today between Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya and his Jordanian counterpart and envoy of King Husayn to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Tahir al-Masri, who has been visiting Tunisia since yesterday within a tour of Arab Maghreb Union member countries for consultation on Arab issues.

Tahir al-Masri stated that the views of both sides on all the issues of the region, headed by the Palestine question and developments in Iraq, were very similar. He said that the two sides reiterated the need to coordinate and adhere to the constant Arab stands represented in the solution of the Palestine question on the basis of international legitimacy, that is, on the basis of UN Resolution 242, and an international Middle East conference with the participation of the PLO in all future negotiations in its capacity as the representative of the Palestine people.

The Jordanian minister added that they agreed, on the other hand, on the need for upholding the territorial integrity of Iraq and for working on the Arab and domestic level toward this end. Tahir al-Masri affirmed that the talks also covered relations between Tunisia and

Jordan, pointing out that the two sides have expressed pleasure at the progress of these relations.

Received by Ben Ali

LD2603032991 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
2300 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Yesterday afternoon, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri in the presence of Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya.

Tahir al-Masri said that he conveyed a message to the president from King Husayn which expressed the sentiments of fraternity for him and for the brotherly Tunisian people. He added that the talks dealt with the current situation in the Arab region, particularly developments since the Gulf war, and in the Palestine issue, and that he noted agreement on all these issues.

Concludes Visit, Departs

LD2603140291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic
1300 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri left Tunisia this morning at the end of a two-day visit during which he conveyed a message from King Husayn of Jordan to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Before leaving Tunisia, the Jordanian foreign minister stated that the results of this visit were excellent and that Jordan and King Husayn are pleased to deal with Tunisia and President Ben Ali within the framework of consultations between the two political leaderships regarding all issues of the Arab region.

He indicated that his lengthy talks with his Tunisian counterpart, Habib Ben Yahya, will serve the Arab common interest and the interest of Tunisia and Jordan. He pointed out that the two countries have agreed to maintain a continuous contact on all levels to follow up on the situation and coordinate their stances on political matters pertaining to the development of the post-Gulf war period, the Palestinian cause, and the common Arab action.

Kuwait

Prime Minister Discusses Repatriation, Democracy

LD2503154691 London KUNA in Arabic 1229 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 25 Mar (KUNA)—Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, has stated that he expects Kuwaiti nationals now abroad to begin to return to the homeland prior or immediately after the 'Id al-Fitr feast.

The prime minister was speaking to representatives of the Lebanese press and information media. The text of his statement was distributed by the Prime Minister's Office here today.

Shaykh Sa'd also said that, as for non-Kuwaitis, the measures taken will not permit those who left to return to Kuwait unless they meet the conditions laid down by the security authorities.

His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, gave the following interview with representatives of the Lebanese press on Sunday 24 March 1991:

His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, met this morning [24 March] at 0900 hours with a Lebanese press delegation comprising 40 journalists representing various Lebanese papers and mass media organs. [passage omitted]

His highness the heir apparent and prime minister made the following address: First, I would like to welcome you all as dear brothers from dear Lebanon. I thank you for your good words in which you expressed your support for Kuwait during its plight of the last months brought about by the hated Iraqi aggression and occupation. Thanks be to God that Kuwait has regained its freedom; the enemy has left Kuwait in defeat. I would like now to answer your questions.

[Unidentified reporter] Would Your Highness tell us about steps being taken to form a new government?

[Shaykh Sa'd] Of course. I am carrying our contacts and meetings with all brothers in order to form a new government which will carry out the implementation of all plans in economic, social, security, and military fields. Of course, the process of forming a government warrants extensive contacts, meetings and consultations. I pray to God to grant me success and guide everyone else to serve best our dear homeland.

[Unidentified reporter] Can we ask Your Highness about how the economic and financial crisis in the country is being tackled?

[Shaykh Sa'd] There are several formulas and plans which have been prepared by brother members of the government.

They are now under study by concerned quarters specializing in economic and financial matters to find out the method and means for tackling the Kuwaiti economy in all spheres so it may regain its dynamism and vitality and return to the state it was in before the treacherous Iraqi aggression last August. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] Can one define exactly the volume of the material and human losses?

[Shaykh Sa'd] The losses are great and many. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] What about compensations for losses sustained by Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis?

[Shaykh Sa'd] As journalists you have followed the Security Council resolutions, including a clear-cut resolution which is binding on Iraqi authorities to compensate for private and public properties and to pay adequate compensation. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] What is the future of relations between Kuwait and Lebanon?

[Shaykh Sa'd] The relations between Kuwait and the fraternal Republic of Lebanon are strong, and God willing, these relations will become stronger during the coming months. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] How will your relations with Iraq be in the future?

[Shaykh Sa'd] To answer this question is premature.

[Unidentified reporter] How are the private consultations on the formation of the new government going with Kuwait personalities who are abroad?

[Shaykh Sa'd] I will begin my contacts during the next couple of days, and we do not exclude the means of contact with the brothers who are abroad, whether in the Arab states or Europe.

[Unidentified reporter] Does this mean their return for this purpose?

[Shaykh Sa'd] The doors are open for all those who want to return. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified reporter] Regarding the relations between the Kuwaiti Government and the PLO, will they have reflections on the Palestinian community in Kuwait?

[Shaykh Sa'd] Our relations with the Palestinian people are still as they were in the past: We support the Palestinian issue in various spheres and in all international gatherings; our cooperation will continue with the Palestinian brothers in all fields.

[Unidentified reporter] One of the issues that present itself following the liberation concerns the form of future political action in Kuwait, the return of democracy, and the participation of the opposition in the government. How do you envisage the forthcoming stage?

[Shaykh Sa'd] Some people wrongly talk about the return of democracy as though it has been absent from our society. Democracy has been and will always remain one of the basic characteristics of our Kuwaiti society. We can talk, however, about the return of parliamentary life. In this regard, I wish to point out that during the convocation of the Jeddah Popular Conference on 10 October, his highness the amir of Kuwait delivered a frank and clear statement concerning the expansion of consultation. His highness spoke of the return of parliamentary life. I do not wish to add to what his highness the amir of the land stated in this respect.

[Unidentified reporter] What are your official comments on the PLO's statement about the general and personal stands of the Palestinians?

[Shaykh Sa'd] I do not wish to reply to the statement made by some of the leaders of the Palestinian organizations. We have cooperated and will continue to cooperate with the Palestinian people; I repeat, with the Palestinian people in various fields.

[Unidentified reporter] In light of the Damascus Declaration, how do you envision the future of the region's security in the shadow of the settlement attempts in the Middle East?

[Shaykh Sa'd] We in Kuwait and the brothers in the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member countries have learned many lessons as a result of the treacherous Iraqi intentions of the ruling Iraqi regime against Kuwait and the other Gulf countries. As a result of this, we have begun consultations with the brothers in the Gulf to draw up a security strategy based on greater cooperation and support, particularly in the security and military fields, including cooperation with Syria and Egypt.

[Unidentified reporter] What is the nature of Kuwaiti-U.S. relations?

[Shaykh Sa'd] U.S.-Kuwaiti relations have been and still are strong and full of desire to cooperate with the United States and other friendly countries in various spheres; we hope that matters in this respect are clear. I would like to add that there will be strong cooperation with the United States and other friendly countries to provide security for Kuwait and the other Gulf countries.

[Unidentified reporter] What are the priorities to rebuild Kuwait?

[Shaykh Sa'd] I wish that the question had been on the government's priorities, which are security and stability of the country and the citizens, as well as those living with us inside Kuwait. Everyone should feel secure and safe, and we must also deal with the rebuilding of what the war destroyed.

[Unidentified reporter] Will the opposition be part of the government?

[Shaykh Sa'd] It is not an opposition as understood in other countries; there are a number of brother citizens

who have different orientations and opinions. We, in Kuwait, are used to brotherhood, kinship, mutual support, and understanding. We will continue such a policy through calm dialogue and understanding. Such consultations will continue in an atmosphere of friendship; we are all working hand in hand for the sake of the homeland, for the citizens in all fields.

[Unidentified reporter] Kuwait is an oil-producing country that has throughout the years built important financial reserves. Will such reserves be affected by the losses caused by the Iraqi invasion?

[Shaykh Sa'd] Of course anyone visiting the oil installations and seeing for himself the number of burning oil fields can assess the losses caused by setting fire to the oil fields. This has meant that our production has been halted until we, God willing, are able in the near future to restart production and export. I can say here that the losses are great, very great indeed.

[Unidentified reporter] Kuwait imports food products and water from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other countries. Are they paid for and when will there be a move from free sustenance to normal life?

[Shaykh Sa'd] [Passage omitted] As for food products and others, they are imported by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and merchants from the markets of the fraternal Kingdom.

[Unidentified reporter] What is the future of Kuwaiti investments in the Arab states which supported Iraq?

[Shaykh Sa'd] The issue is not confined to investments only, but is an issue of cooperation and relations with these states in the future, and it is regrettable or rather painful that these states adopted a stance supporting the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. These states stood publicly and openly supporting and backing the invasion and aggression by Iraq. This support emerged in the political and information fields, and it also included the military domain, as it appeared lately.

[Unidentified reporter] How do you see the future of the Arab League?

[Shaykh Sa'd] Consultations and meetings took place and will take place between the brother foreign ministers of the Arab states in order to find one or more formulas to solve the differences between the fraternal Arab states, and these meetings aim also at finding a formula which strengthens the Arab stance and highlights Arab issues in the regional and international meetings. The most prominent of these issues is the question of the Palestinian people and the defense of their legitimate rights so that they will be able to recover their usurped rights and territory.

[Unidentified reporter] Will Kuwait borrow from international markets to finance its rebuilding operation?

[Shaykh Sa'd] I will not reply in detail to this question. This is one of the matters the government is studying in order to formulate its position in this respect.

[Unidentified reporter] How do you view the Lebanese situation at this stage and the progress toward the solution of the Lebanese problem?

[Shaykh Sa'd] If we recall the destitution, internecine fighting, and devastation which the fraternal Lebanese people have suffered and continue to suffer in the various fields, I believe firmly that the time has come for the majority of the Lebanese to act quickly to restore harmony, accord, and peace among the various factions and sections of dear Lebanon, out of their care for these objectives and for the prevalence of security in fraternal Lebanon.

We in Kuwait on the official level are prepared to provide moral and material support for the sake of Lebanon and the Lebanese people. The dear Lebanese people have suffered enough devastation, destitution, and internecine fighting. The time has come for the Lebanese people to realize that Lebanon's interests now and in the future lie in overlooking the past, opening a new page, working for greater cooperation, and building a new Lebanon: a Lebanon of love, fraternity, and support. God willing, this will be realized soon.

[Unidentified reporter] Can Your Highness talk about your role in the negotiations with Iraq during the crisis which preceded the Iraqi aggression—it is rumored that the Kuwaiti attitude was not flexible—and also at the Jeddah meeting?

[Shaykh Sa'd] I led the Kuwaiti delegation at the Jeddah meeting, while the Iraqi delegation was led by Deputy Chairman of the Revolution Command Council 'Izzat Ibrahim. I went from Kuwait carrying true desire and great enthusiasm and more than one formula for understanding with the Iraqi side regarding the topics which the Iraqi side raised in the two memoranda to the Arab League and to which we replied at that time; I was optimistic following the efforts of King Fahd and President Mubarak in preparing the climate. But regrettably, at the Jeddah meeting I found the leader of the Iraqi side carrying out a specific mission which he was asked to do. He completed its performance. He did not have total mandate to continue the discussion, and the Kuwaiti-Iraqi meeting in Jeddah closed on the basis that we should meet once again in Iraq within days. I asked that we should meet again for the third time in Kuwait. I then returned to Kuwait at seven o'clock in the evening, and few hours later the Iraqi invasion took place. This indicates that there were premeditated intentions and plans prior to the Jeddah meeting. [passage omitted]

Pakistani Prime Minister Arrives, Offers Help

Meets Amir, Addresses Pakistanis

BK2503162091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who arrived in Kuwait today on a one-day visit, assured the amir of Kuwait that, as a brotherly Islamic country, Pakistan will provide every possible help in the reconstruction of war-ravaged Kuwait.

Addressing Pakistanis in Kuwait City after a meeting with the amir of Kuwait, he said that we are not trying to secure attractive contracts by taking advantage of the situation. We feel that being Muslim, it is our duty to help our Muslim brothers wherever they are. The prime minister said that, in this spirit, Pakistan is ready to extend every possible help to the brotherly country of Kuwait in its reconstruction. He referred to the wholehearted support extended to Pakistan's diplomatic efforts for ending the Gulf war and the liberation of Kuwait and said that we are proud of our principled stand on this issue.

In this context, he said that his government's diplomatic moves and his visit to a number of countries in an effort to find a peaceful settlement of the crisis in light of the UN resolutions boosted Pakistan's prestige in the community of nations and [words indistinct] among the Kuwaiti people.

The prime minister said that the international community should pay the same attention to the independence of occupied Kashmir as it did to the case of Kuwait.

Nawaz Sharif had a meeting with Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the prime minister of Kuwait, and exchanged views with him on matters of bilateral interest in the post-Gulf war period. Nawaz Sharif is the first head of government to visit Kuwait since the Gulf war ended. The prime minister returned to Islamabad a short while ago.

Departs After One-Day Visit

LD2503163591 London KUNA in Arabic 1226 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 25 March (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, His Royal Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, met at 1100 today with Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, who offered his country's most sincere congratulations to Kuwait on its victory and liberation and affirmed his government's readiness to contribute to the rebuilding of Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The Pakistani prime minister left Kuwait at 1330 today accompanied by members of his delegation at the end of their visit to the country. They were given an official sendoff at the Kuwait international airport with the heir apparent heading those at hand to bid them farewell. [passage omitted]

Romania Seeks To Participate in Reconstruction

LD2503232191 London KUNA in Arabic 1950 GMT
22 Mar 91

[Formerly Kuwait KUNA]

[Excerpts] Vienna [dateline as received]—Romania has renewed its desire to deepen bonds of friendship and cooperation with Kuwait and to participate as much as possible in the operation of rebuilding Kuwait, which

has been liberated from the clutches of the tyrannical Iraqi occupation. This assertion came in a statement made by the official spokesman of the Romanian Government. [passage omitted]

The spokesman said that the government has prepared a series of suggestions which Romania can submit to Kuwait on participating in the reconstruction of Kuwait. He pointed out that these proposals include the possibility of implementing joint ventures between Romanian and Kuwaiti establishments on such matters as the technologies of extracting crude oil and the rebuilding of the petrochemical industry, power generating stations, desalination stations, and oil pipelines. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Addresses Cabinet Meeting 25 Mar

LD2603035991 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0045 GMT
26 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 25 Mar (SPA)—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, presided over the meeting held by the Council of Ministers at al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh at 2200 this evening.

In a statement to SPA after the meeting, Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir said: At the beginning of the session the Council of Ministers reviewed all the reports pertaining to general political and security matters in the Arab arena. In the context of its continued concerns, the council followed up the most significant reports by Arab and international media organs over the past few hours on the situation in the Arabian Gulf region in the aftermath of the achievements that ended with the liberation of brotherly Kuwait. Considering the aforementioned reports, the council heard from King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques. Also heard was an overall political analysis of the nature of the current phase in the history of the Arab nation and that of the region, and a critical review of the stances adopted by some Arab states vis-a-vis the Gulf events and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's stance vis-a-vis these states. [passage omitted]

The custodian of the two holy mosques pointed out that the Kingdom will continue its backing and support for the brotherly Palestinian people's issue until God grants them victory in achieving their just and legitimate demands, and they return to their homeland in control of their self-determination. [passage omitted]

Prince Khalid Returns From GCC Tour, Comments

LD2503163491 Riyadh SPA in English 1229 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Riyadh, March 25, SPA—Lt. Gen. Prince Khalid Bin-Sultan Al Sa'ud, commander of the joint forces, returned to Riyadh last night after a tour of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries. Meanwhile, Prince Khalid said the security cooperation between the GCC countries has given a strong impression to the whole world that no aggression or threat by a country against the other will materialize.

Addressing a news conference in Abu Dhabi earlier yesterday, Prince Khalid said the GCC armed forces will be strengthened in view of lessons learnt from the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait. Prince Khalid hailed the outcome of his tour which took him also to Egypt and Syria. He said he will make a similar tour of Senegal, Niger and Morocco.

Prince Khalid disclosed that the number of Iraqi prisoners of war reached 62,000 and noted that a agreement has been reached for the release of 1,000 POW daily and hoped that the number would increase to reach 5,000 per day.

United Arab Emirates

Saudi Commander Arrives, Meets Shaykh Zayid

NC2303203791 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1810 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Abu Dhabi, 23 Mar (WAKH)—Staff Lieutenant General Prince Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the joint forces and the theater of operations in Saudi Arabia, arrived in Abu Dhabi this evening on a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. [passage omitted]

[Manama WAKH in Arabic at 1820 GMT on 23 March adds the following: "UAE President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan tonight received Staff Lt. Gen. Prince Khalid Bin-Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz. The meeting involved a discussion of the current developments in the region in the light of the liberation of the State of Kuwait and the restoration of the legitimate government to that country. The two officials also discussed a number of issues of concern to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council."]

Somali Prime Minister Arrives for Talks 24 Mar

NC2403193391 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1730 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 24 Mar (WAKH)—Omar Arteh Gha-leb, the prime minister of the provisional government in Somalia, arrived in Abu Dhabi today on a visit to the United Arab Emirates [UAE] as part of a tour in the area. The Somali official will hold talks with senior UAE officials on the situation in the region, issues of common interest, and the relations between the two countries.

Saddam Meets With Hammadi, 'Aziz, New Ministers*NC2503223891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2228 GMT
25 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—President Saddam Husayn this evening met with Prime Minister Dr. Sa'dun Hammadi, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn, and Minister of Culture and Information Hamid Yusuf Hammadi.

During the meeting, they discussed the prime minister's visit to the central Euphrates governorates and the deputy prime minister's visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. They also discussed political developments in the region.

Delegation To Attend Arab League Session*NC2603103391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1000 GMT
26 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—INA has learned that Iraq will send a delegation to the Arab League council meeting scheduled for 30 March. The delegation will be headed by Mr. Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, ambassador and chief of the Arab Desk at the Foreign Ministry.

The Arab League called the session to look into intra-Arab relations in the aftermath of recent regional developments.

National Assembly To Hold 'Ordinary Session' 6 Apr*NC2603105391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0955 GMT
26 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—The National Assembly will convene the spring session's first meeting within its ordinary session on 6 April.

During their discussions, the people's representatives will focus on formulating the foundations and bases of the new democratic phase that will include public liberties, freedom of the press, and party pluralism under the supremacy of the Constitution and the law in order to contribute to consolidating the Iraqis' power, unity, cohesiveness, and capability.

The discussions will also center on expanding the masses' participation in the administration of the country's affairs and their support for the ongoing political changes in the country in light of the ideological and political concepts contained in President Saddam Husayn's speech. Discussions will also deal with the provisions and clauses of the new Iraqi constitution which was suspended due to the American-Zionist-Atlantic aggression.

The discussions will deal with the means by which Iraq can overcome the grave damage that has been caused to the people's public institutions by acts of looting, plundering, burning, and destruction perpetrated by the

deluded saboteurs and mobs. During the session, participants will also touch on how to rebuild what has been destroyed by the American-Atlantic-Zionist aggression against Iraq.

New 50-Dinar Banknote To Be Issued 'Soon'*NC2303145391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1310 GMT
23 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—The Iraqi Central Bank has decided to issue a new 50-dinar banknote, which will be put into circulation soon. In a statement issued today, the Central Bank said the new banknote will be a 175x80-mm rectangle, with the picture of President Saddam Husayn on its face.

The back of the banknote will carry a picture of the spiral minaret in Samarra' with "Iraqi Central Bank" written in English on the top. The Assyrian palm tree is featured on the right-hand side of the banknote.

Health Minister Receives Cuban Official*NC2403171091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1515 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—Health Minister 'Abd-al-Salam Muhammad Sa'id today met with Alberto Cespedes, under secretary of the Cuban Health Ministry, and his delegation. They discussed means of bolstering cooperation in the health field between the two countries.

The minister reviewed the difficult conditions which the health institutions are facing as a result of the U.S. and Atlantic aggression, the destruction inflicted by the mobs and their plunder of medicines and various health equipment, as well as the medicine and food blockade imposed on Iraq since 2 August 1990. This, he added, has created difficulties in implementing health programs and offering medical services to citizens.

Mr. Alberto Cespedes, under secretary of the Cuban Health Ministry, said his visit to Iraq aims at strengthening the ties of friendship between the two countries and bolstering cooperation in the health field.

Baghdad Notes EC Decision To Send Aid*NC2603122391 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic
1130 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Text] During their meeting in Brussels yesterday, the EC member states' agriculture ministers decided to ease the economic blockade imposed on Iraq by facilitating the process of sending urgent humanitarian aid, especially food and medical supplies, to Iraq.

[Sentence indistinct] The radio said that the EC agricultural ministers council decided to introduce some amendments to the resolution imposing a blockade on Iraq.

The EC ministerial council emphasized that the EC has approved allowing health and medical supplies to enter Iraq [words indistinct].

Ministry Prepares Study for Reconstruction

NC2603152691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1440 GMT
26 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—Iraq has prepared an integrated study for reconstruction of the areas destroyed by the war of aggression and mobs.

Minister of Housing and Reconstruction Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad said that his ministry has formed a committee of specialists to assess the damage inflicted on buildings, bridges, and roads caused by the imperialist-U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression. The committee will inspect the areas that had been sabotaged by the misled mobs.

The minister added that the ministry has started repairing several bridges, including al-'Amarah, al-Kifl, al-Falujah, and al-Shuhada' in Baghdad and Khalid Ibn-al-Walid in al-Basrah. He stressed 96 bridges were damaged in the war of aggression, including 56 concrete bridges, 25 floating bridges, and 11 railroad bridges [figures as received].

The minister said that work [words indistinct] in Wasit, al-'Amarah, and al-Basrah and to repair the telecommunications centers in Baghdad.

Al-Khu'i Meets Al-Najaf Governor, Thanks Saddam

NC2303111091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1005 GMT
23 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Mar (INA)—His Eminence Imam Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i has denounced the criminal acts of murder and destruction against the citizens and the burning of their property and of the state's public service assets by mobs.

During a visit to his eminence by al-Najaf Governor 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Dawri, Imam al-Khu'i said: No Muslim could do such a thing. We greatly regret that Muslims are being murdered and their property looted. He added that such acts are forbidden and are crimes unacceptable to any Muslim. His eminence expressed thanks and appreciation to President Saddam Husayn for receiving him. He said: Words cannot describe the warm reception he gave me and the sympathy and love he showed me; my tongue cannot express this.

His eminence asked his excellency the governor to extend his thanks to President Saddam Husayn for his warm reception in Baghdad and for the efforts that have been exerted to restore security and stability throughout al-Najaf Governorate.

Government Representatives Continue Regional Visits

Ba'th Official Visits Al-Basrah

NC2503195991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1835 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Basrah, 25 Mar (INA)—'Abd al-Ghani 'Abd al-Ghafur, member of the Ba'th Party Regional Command and secretary of the Ba'th Party's branch in the south, emphasized that the sons of al-Basrah Governorate support and rally around the historic leadership of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn.

In an interview with INA in al-Basrah Governorate today, he said that the recent events in al-Basrah are an extension of the colonialist-Zionist conspiracy against great Iraq's edifice of civilization that President Saddam Husayn erected.

He pointed out that the conspiracy that was wiped out began with the infiltration of a straying handful of people employed by the foreigner. Cooperating with degraded people, they plundered, committed sabotage, forced open prison doors, set things on fire, and vandalized government and private institutions.

'Abd al-Ghani 'Abd al-Ghafur said drugs they brought with them from outside the country were found in places where the mobs had been.

On the future of al-Basrah Governorate, 'Abd al-Ghani 'Abd al-Ghafur said that there continues to be militant mobilization and there is a determination to rebuild what the colonialist-U.S.-Zionist aggression destroyed and what the agent and saboteur elements tampered with in heroic al-Basrah Governorate.

He added that citizens, party organs, and popular organizations in the governorate, in coordination with the administrative organs, are stepping up their work and that an ad hoc committee has been formed to follow up the reconstruction operations in the city.

'Abd al-Ghani 'Abd al-Ghafur met with al-Basrah Governor 'Abdallah Talab 'Ajrani today. They reviewed all of the administrative and technical activities and the services that will contribute to serving the citizens of al-Basrah.

Ramadan Chairs Karbala' Meeting

NC2503172991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1630 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Karbala', 25 Mar (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and vice president, visited Karbala' governorate this morning. Ramadan chaired an expanded meeting at the governorate premises attended by Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and military industrialization; the Karbala' governor; the secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, al-Najaf branch; and officials in charge of governorate departments.

Addressing the meeting, Taha Yasin Ramadan said that the anarchy, sabotage, and looting being done by the misguided are aimed at implementing the enemies' plots against the sons of our people and are in line with the enemies' schemes and attack on justice.

The vice president emphasized that the agents' methods are to use gangs and mobs and run counter to all values, heavenly principles, and the Islamic religion, which advocates love, cooperation, and constructive work and which rejects all the acts of the criminal agents. The RCC member called for doubling efforts and organizing coordination between the party's organizations and the state's departments on the one hand and the citizens on the other to repair the saboteurs' deeds and to cleanse the holy governorate of their criminal aggressive effects.

The vice president listened to a detailed briefing from al-Najaf Governor 'Abd-al-Khalik 'Abd-al-'Aziz and the comrade secretary of the Karbala' party branch about efforts to return life to normal in the governorate. They reiterated the full readiness of the governorate's sons to contribute money, property, and efforts to reconstruct Karbala' Governorate.

Taha Yasin Ramadan toured Karbala' Governorate and al-Musayyib District and saw for himself the normal life the citizens are leading while enjoying security and tranquillity. He also assured himself of the normal office hours observed by the state's departments and schools in the governorate.

Official on Maysan Reconstruction

NC2503200191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1915 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Maysan, 25 Mar (INA)—Samir Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'ith Party Regional Command, has said that the sons of Maysan Governorate are completing construction and reconstruction work in the governorate, its districts, and subdistricts.

In statement to INA in al-'Amarah today, the regional command member said that work is under way to remove the rubble and to repair the destruction caused by the imperialist-Zionist aggression as well as by mobs and charlatans. He added that the group that inflicted harm on the sons of the governorate is a corrupt gang that bears a grudge against Iraq's history, people, and civilization.

Samir Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab went on to say that no citizen was spared the evil acts of the saboteurs. Children, women, elderly people, government institutions, and the property of harmless citizens were all targets of the evildoers. He added that the evil charlatans sought the disintegration of Iraq, but had been disappointed and utterly defeated. He also added that Iraq and its people remained steadfast and struggling under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn.

In another development, the regional command member met today with the secretary and members of the Maysan party branch. They discussed all aspects of cooperation and coordination among the various administrative and party organs in an effort to provide the best services to the governorate's sons. The meeting was attended by Maysan Governor 'Abd-al-Ilah al-Mashhadani.

Trade Minister Inspects Damage

NC2503195491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1920 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Qadisiyah, 25 Mar (INA)—Minister of Trade Muhammad Mahdi Salih visited the governorates of al-Qadisiyah, al-Najaf, and Babil today.

The minister discussed with the governors the urgent measures to repair and reopen flour mills and to secure their needs to serve the citizens. He also discussed the ministry's plans to provide the governorates with their foodstuffs needs and to distribute these commodities by ration cards.

During his tour, the minister inspected supply depots and the wheat and paddy rice silos that were looted, damaged, and burned by hooligans and criminals and misguided cliques who tampered with the people's food and property.

Al-Najaf Scholar Denounces Mobs 'Criminal Acts'

NC2403194591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1920 GMT
24 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Mar (INA)—His Eminence Sayyid 'Ali al-Sistani, a religious scholar from holy al-Najaf, has denounced the criminal acts committed by groups of mobs in a number of Iraqi governorates.

In an interview aired on Baghdad Television tonight, he said the Islamic faith does not approve of, and prohibits plundering, theft, disgraceful acts, and the murder of innocents. In conclusion, he beseeched God Almighty to protect Iraq and its people from harm.

Tribal Chieftains Pledge Loyalty to Saddam Husayn

NC2303142591 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
19 Mar 91 p 6

[By Khalid al-Hadidi]

[Text] Tribal chieftains in Nineveh Governorate have hailed the courageous leadership of mujahid [struggler] President Saddam Husayn in confronting the conspiracy and, through his great wisdom, foiling the imperialist and Zionist plans to harm Iraq's march toward construction and progress.

In statements to AL-JUMHURIYAH, they stressed their total allegiance to the mujahid president as well as their readiness to sacrifice all that is dear so that Iraq can

remain lofty under the leadership of the nation's knight and the builder of its glory, Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him.

Comrade Muslim al-Juburi, secretary of the Mosul branch of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, asserted that the citizens' courageous attitude, unity, and coherence have aborted the subversive attempts and the sedition stirred by the foreign and agent elements.

In his statement to AL-JUMHURIYAH, Comrade al-Juburi added that the citizens of the Nineveh Governorate expressed their genuine positions, their honorable national affiliation, and Mosul's deep-rooted history. These citizens, he said, have adopted a historic position by bearing arms to confront all forms of treachery and conspiracy. He then renewed love for and loyalty to the historic leader, Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him.

The chieftain of the al-Huaydin tribes, Haj Muhammad al-Warshan, denounced the subversive acts by the enemies of the nation and the homeland. He said that the sons of Iraq have destroyed the dreams of the treacherous, who wanted to harm the cultural progress of our country after they were frightened by the lofty cultural structure, whose groundwork was laid down by the builder of Iraq's glory, Saddam Husayn. He also pledged that he and the sons of his tribe—young and old—will remain loyal soldiers to the leader and to the principles, will stand at the forefront to defend the homeland and the nation's honor, and will sacrifice all that is dear for the sake of Iraq's strength.

He emphasized that the ferocity of the forces of evil and aggression will not be able to harm Iraq's land or stop the march of progress and construction started and led by Saddam Husayn, the lofty hero and mujahid, may God preserve him.

He also said that the conspiracy will not succeed and we will bury it regardless of the sacrifice. We, he added, are swords in the hand of the beloved leader that will chop off the heads of those who sold their honor.

Haj Ghazi al-Hanash, chieftain of the Tayy tribes in Nineveh Governorate, denounced the criminal actions carried out by the agents, and announced his absolute readiness to offer every sacrifice to defend the soil of the homeland and stand behind the leadership of President Saddam Husayn, builder of Iraq's glory, may God preserve him.

He affirmed that all the zealous Iraqis are honored to shoulder their historic responsibility to enable Iraq to remain strong and proud.

Shaykh Hazim al-Hamad 'Alas and Shaykh Jum'ah Ahmad al-Dawwar renewed their allegiance to the mujahid leader on behalf of the Albu Badran and al-Bakarah tribes in Nineveh Governorate and its villages and in the al-Fallujah, al-Musayyib, al-Iskandariyah, and Huwayjah districts.

In statements to AL-JUMHURIYAH, they stressed support for his excellency the president as well as their complete readiness to offer every sacrifice for the sake of Iraq and the nation and to bury the overt conspiracy.

Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Sab'awi, chieftain of the al-Sab'awi tribe in the al-Qayyarah and Mosul areas pledged to Saddam Husayn, the symbol and mujahid leader, may God preserve him, to stand firmly behind his great leadership.

He renewed his readiness and that of his tribe to volunteer and sacrifice for the strength of Iraq and its great leader. He added that the sinful dogs of colonialism cannot harm Iraq's march and its historic leadership.

Concluding, he beseeched Almighty God to preserve symbol leader Saddam Husayn as an asset for Iraq and the glorious Arab nation.

Dr. Nawwaf Sallud Agha, chieftain of the al-Jurbah tribe, denounced the subversive acts carried out by the criminals in accordance with the foreign forces' plan.

He pledged to leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, to stand behind his leadership and to remain loyal soldiers to protect the precious soil of the homeland from the filth of the greedy enemies, who are lying in wait for the wealth of our dear country.

Concluding, he said that the ferocity and cowardly behavior of the forces of evil and aggression against our dear Iraq and beloved leader will not frighten us but will rather increase our insistence on building great Iraq.

Rebel Leaders Report Gains Achieved

NC2503183691 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1918 GMT 24 Mar 91

[From the weekly "Behind the News" program]

[Text] Gentlemen: A Syrian Arab Television team has interviewed some leaders of the popular uprising in Iraq. We leave you with some of these interviews.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] Dear viewers: In the city of Zakho, which was liberated from the control of the regime and is today under the control of the revolutionary forces against the regime in Iraq, we held a field interview with brother Dr. Kamal al-Karkuki, member of the Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan and the official in charge of the first branch in that party.

[Al-Karkuki] We welcome you and are honored. We are now in the city of Zakho, which is liberated from the filth of the corrupt clique headed by Saddam Husayn, who destroyed the Iraqi people, Army, and economy all for nothing. We thank and welcome you.

[Reporter] Dr. Kamal, I would like to ask you, what are the most important areas under your control today?

[Al-Karkuki] Yes. Regarding the Governorate of Dahuk, its districts and subdistricts, they are today under the control of the peshmergas. The cities of al-Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, and Karkuk and all their districts and subdistricts have all been liberated and are all under the control of the peshmergas and the people. In accordance with the decision of the people and the popular uprising, supported by the Kurdistan Front members and the overall Iraqi revolution, battles raged in some sectors and ended with the victory of the people and the revolutionaries over military units, which were destroyed. Moreover, there was some resistance inside the cities, especially by the security and military intelligence forces.

[Reporter] When was Zakho liberated?

[Al-Karkuki] Zakho was liberated on 15 March.

[Reporter] And Dahuk?

[Al-Karkuki] Dahuk on 14 March. A zero hour was observed in all districts and subdistricts from Dahuk to Shiladiza in cooperation with the Kurdistan Front members, the people, and the brother armed advisers among the sons of our people who were with the regime prior to that date. Operations began at 0500 and ended at about 1500 in most cities that were liberated in one day.

[Reporter] We see various types of weapons now available or rather displayed before us. Are these your own weapons, or were they seized from the regime's armed battalions?

[Al-Karkuki] All the heavy weapons you see today, including tanks, armored vehicles, heavy artillery, Strela missiles, various types of Doshkas, ammunition, and light weapons are what the people and the revolution seized from the collapsing Iraqi Army.

[Reporter] Specific battalions, platoons, and brigades have joined the revolution forces as reported by various news media and your sources. What is your assessment of the size of these forces and platoons, and their importance for your revolution?

[Al-Karkuki] Yes, that is correct. After it was proven to our brothers in the brave Iraqi Army that the regime does not serve the Iraqi people, and has destroyed the Iraqi people, Army, and economy, they decided to join the revolution and cooperate with the people. There were two army corps in Kurdistan. Most of them joined the revolution without a fight. Now there are many high-ranking officers and non-commissioned officers among us. They are cooperating with us to topple the regime in Baghdad and declare the rule of law in Iraq, where all sons of the Iraqi people will enjoy liberty and safety on the land of dear Iraq.

[Reporter] Dear viewers, we also met with a number of Iraqi Army officers who joined the popular revolution forces in Iraq. We conducted the following interview:

[Unidentified officer] The uprising began in both the south and north. The entire people are against criminal Saddam Husayn, because he is a dictator and suffers from megalomania. He used extreme brutality in destroying villages and used chemical weapons in the Halabjah and Bahdinan areas in Dahuk. The uprising is a popular one from the south to the north against the dictator. Therefore, we joined the ranks of the people against the tyrant Saddam Husayn.

[Reporter] What is your assessment of the size of the Iraqi Army force that has joined the revolutionaries?

[Officer] I do not exactly know, but it is in the thousands. The Iraqi soldier came to join the intifadah. All those in their homes, even those on leave—officers and soldiers—did not rejoin their units but joined the uprising against the tyrant.

[Reporter] Who is responsible for all that has taken place recently in Iraq?

[Officer] Only Saddam Husayn; no one else.

[Reporter] Thank you. You have served with the Iraqi Army units in al-Basrah. What can you tell us about what took place there, especially since international news agencies and media sources reported terrible things about what took place in al-Basrah?

[Second officer] On my way back from Kuwait through al-Basrah and al-'Amarah Governorates, I found that the uprising was in control of the cities of al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, and al-Kut. When I entered the capital, Baghdad, I saw tanks, armored vehicles, and Doshkas in the streets of Baghdad. This indicated that there was an uprising in the areas of Baghdad, especially the cities of al-Thawrah, al-Hurriyah, al-Mashtal, and al-Shu'lah. The uprising was everywhere. When I returned to the northern area, I saw an uprising there and the heroic Kurdish peshmergas were in full control of the entire northern area, especially the oil rich Karkuk area.

[Reporter] Regarding what you saw in al-Basrah, what can you tell us about the practices of the Iraqi regime there?

[Officer] I saw units, especially Republican Guard units, moving to the city of al-'Amarah and proceeding toward the city of al-Basrah. The morale of the Iraqi Army was very low. Of course, the Iraqi Army is brave, which the whole world knows. But no one was ready to fight the Iraqi people, because the Army is from the people and the people are from the Army. Therefore, I did not see much fighting between the Army and people. There was fighting only by those opposing Saddam Husayn.

[Reporter] Excuse me, you mean those loyal to him.

[Officer] Yes, the loyal ones.

[Reporter] You mean his personal guards, or some units of the Republican Guards, because reports say that units of the Republican Guards have also joined the people's ranks.

[Second officer] Yes, units, particularly those stationed in al-'Amarah and al-Basrah and many units, especially of the Republican Guards, joined the ranks of the popular uprising there.

[Reporter] Thank you.

[Officer] Thank you very much.

[Reporter] We had the following interview with another field commander, brother Haydar, member of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party and commander of the northern region operations. Could you please talk about the most important principles and ideas of the uprising and the extent of the interaction and cooperation between the various revolution forces in this splendid popular movement?

[Haydar] To begin with, allow me to extend our great thanks to our brothers in the Arab homeland and to our friends throughout the world for their support for the brave uprising of our people. Our Iraqi people, who are known for their courage, valor, and love of freedom, have risen up out of their sense of responsibility for the homeland. The principles of our uprising are defined in the program of the Joint Action Committee, which includes all national, democratic, Islamic, and pan-Arab parties and movements. In short, we are struggling to end the dictatorship, establish a democracy, and form a national coalition government based on a state of law, pluralism, legitimacy, and freedom of parties, press, and professional unions. Our uprising has clear and candid principles. It is an Iraqi revolution, not, as some claim, a purely Kurdish revolution, or a revolution that has a certain religious or sectarian character. It is the revolution of the people in all their factions and political powers. [end recording] [video shows Iraqi areas of Zakho and Dahuk with destroyed military vehicles and tanks]

Islamic Revolution Leader on Provisional Government

LD2503220691 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq
in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, leader of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq, said that he does not support setting up a provisional government in northern Iraq as proposed by Mas'ud Barzani. Barzani called on the Iraqi opposition to move toward the liberated regions of northern Iraq to set up a provisional government that would administer the liberated regions and work toward liberation of the rest of the homeland from the tyrant's regime.

Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim stressed that it would be better to wait for the liberation of all Iraqi territory from dictatorship and the overthrow of the tyrant Saddam,

and then set up a provisional government to administer the country's affairs until direct democratic elections are held.

Dissidents Say Popular Uprising 'Gaining Momentum'

NC2503122191 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0944 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Damascus, 25 Mar (SANA)—Iraqi resistance elements and Army officers have told a Syrian Television team that the popular uprising against the Baghdad fascist regime throughout the country is gaining momentum.

Dr. Kamal al-Karkuki, a Central Committee member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, who comes from Zakho, which has been freed from the corrupt clique, said that the Dahuk Governorate and all its districts are now under the control of the popular forces. The cities of Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, Karkuk, along with all their districts and sub-districts have now been freed, he added.

Al-Karkuki said the Saddam forces have used internationally banned incendiary napalm bombs against the popular uprising causing burns to numerous people, including women and children, who have been admitted into the Zakho town hospital.

The popular forces had fought running battles over five days, eventually capturing chemical weapons factories and their storage depots.

He said that having realized that the government does not serve the people, elements of the Iraqi Armed Forces have defected to the revolution to join the battle against the regime. Two corps have switched to the popular forces without a fight, including officers and non-commissioned officers, who are now engaged in the effort to topple the regime and set up a democratic system of government.

A group of Army officers who have joined the popular revolution said the uprising has erupted in the north and the south with the entire people standing up against the tyrant Saddam Husayn, who is deploying his entire arsenal of repression to destroy towns and villages just as he did in Halabjah and Dahuk.

People are now joining the revolution in droves, with thousands of soldiers defecting to the uprising. They stressed that Saddam is responsible for what has happened in Iraq. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Sayyid Haydar, member of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party, and commander of operations in the north, said we thank our brothers and friends around the world for extending support to the popular uprising. Our people, renowned for their courage and fondness for freedom, he added, will strive until the tyrannical regime is brought down.

Former Ambassador To Join Opposition Forces

LD2503114691 Belgrade TANJUG in English
 1028 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Madrid, March 25 (TANJUG)—Former Iraqi ambassador in Madrid Irshad Tawfiq is of the view that Saddam Husayn's days are numbered and that the opposition will soon take over in Iraq.

Irshad Tawfiq recently asked for political asylum in Madrid. It is claimed that he has close political and family ties with the Iraqi regime. The Spanish Government granted asylum, but Tawfiq left yesterday for Saudi Arabia to join the opposition forces fighting against Saddam Husayn.

Speaking of the tragedy of the Iraqi people, Irshad Tawfiq underscored that he thought Saddam Husayn would commit suicide, but that he is not even thinking of resigning, whereas the Peruvian minister of health had stepped down after 30 persons had died of cholera. The Saudi Government has sent a special plane to bring Irshad Tawfiq to Riyadh.

Kurdish Leader Talabani Discusses Rebellion

AU2503173991 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German
 25 Mar 91 pp 214-217

[Interview with Djalal Talabani, chief of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, by DER SPIEGEL; place and date not given: "Saddam Will Not Survive"]

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Can Saddam Husayn's regime survive the rebellion in Iraq, to which the Kurds are making a considerable contribution?

[Talabani] In Kurdistan alone, we already control 95 percent of the territory. Our freedom fighters are in al-Mawsil; the Governorates of Dahuk, al-Sulaymaniyah, and Irbil are completely in our hands. Four million people live there. However, the uprising has already seized all of Iraq.

[DER SPIEGEL] Saddam Husayn still has regular troops. And he also has modern and chemical weapons.

[Talabani] Our units found depots of his chemical weapons, but even poison gas will not help him.

[DER SPIEGEL] The use of poison gas ordered by Saddam broke up the Kurdish front before, in the final stage of the Iraqi-Iranian Gulf war.

[Talabani] If Saddam uses chemical weapons, we will use our "water weapon." We will open the dams of Darbandikhan, Bekma, and Dokan, which would have devastating strategic consequences. One way or another, we are in control. By the way, we took more than 60,000 prisoners. Does this not speak for itself?

[DER SPIEGEL] By which countries are you and your allies supported?

[Talabani] So far, by no one. We only hear honey-sweet declarations of sympathy. In fact, we urgently need foodstuffs and medicine. Is it not disgraceful that a country like the FRG immediately forked out millions when four Israelis lost their lives, but it was not even prepared to sacrifice four German marks when 5,000 Kurds were gassed?

[DER SPIEGEL] You can hardly hold out for long without any supplies from outside the borders; the civil war seems to drag on.

[Talabani] The fighting might take longer because Saddam uses napalm and phosphorous and the units of the Iranian "People's Mojahedin" deployed in Iraq—who actually wanted to overthrow the regime in Tehran—became mercenary troops of Saddam Husayn. They also shoot at us. For many officers and functionaries who participated in Saddam's crimes the fight against the people's uprising is a fight for mere survival.

[DER SPIEGEL] Did the allies stop their ground offensive too soon?

[Talabani] Yes. If President Bush had only continued the fighting two more days, Saddam's armed forces would have completely broken down.

[DER SPIEGEL] What interest might the Americans have in Saddam Husayn's political survival?

[Talabani] Apparently, they did not find a substitute for Saddam. Perhaps they also fear an increasing "Shiite flood." However, I also do not rule out that the United States will initiate a pro-American coup.

[DER SPIEGEL] That is to say, you still give Saddam Husayn a chance of survival?

[Talabani] By no means. He plunged the people into too many catastrophes, drove hundreds of thousands to their deaths and treated us Iraqis worse than Genghis Khan and Hulagu. Saddam and his regime will not survive.

[DER SPIEGEL] Might Saddam not also benefit from the discord between the resistance groups?

[Talabani] All resistance organizations cooperate closely and are already developing a joint command structure.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you want to say that Shiite rebels and Arab nationalists are true political allies of the Kurds?

[Talabani] The Iraqi liberation movements recently held a conference in Beirut and determined a common denominator: the overthrow of the dictatorship and the establishment of a liberal democratic state.

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] But are the Shi'ite masses not striving for the establishment of an Islamic republic according to the Persian model?

[Talabani] Nobody made such a demand. Besides, the Iraqi population structure would not permit this. Iraq is

not Iran. About one-third of the population are Kurds, Turkomans, Assyrians, and others, partly Christian Iraqis, account for another million. The Iranian model does not entice the Iraqi Shi'ites to imitate it and can be compared to the decreasing attraction of the October Revolution. Moreover, there are strong secular currents in Iraq, for example, with the socialists and communists.

[DER SPIEGEL] But what about the Kurds' independence aspirations? Are they not in contrast to the concepts of your Arab allies in the civil war?

[Talabani] The Kurds are not calling for independence. Our partnership with the other Iraqi population groups is not questioned by anybody.

[DER SPIEGEL] That is to say, the Kurds are not fighting for a Kurdish state now?

[Talabani] We have in mind a federal state according to the model of Czechoslovakia—of course, always on the basis of democratic freedoms for all and within the framework of a secular constitution.

[DER SPIEGEL] Even if your Arab partners were to agree to this, Turkey might be up in arms against it, since more than 9 million Kurds are living on Turkish territory.

[Talabani] Turkish President Turgut Ozal even claimed that he is not afraid of a "Kurdish state in Iraq," which we are not planning at all. He told me that he recognizes the existence of the Kurdish people and their right to autonomy. This is very positive and almost revolutionary for Turkey. There is no danger from this quarter. We want to remain in the Iraqi state—the right to freedom and our own identity is enough for us.

[DER SPIEGEL] Why does the Iraqi resistance not form a government-in-exile, which would certainly be recognized by numerous countries?

[Talabani] We reject a government-in-exile somewhere abroad.

[DER SPIEGEL] Then why is no interim government proclaimed in the regions from which Saddam Husayn's troops were already driven away?

[Talabani] A relevant proposal is already being discussed. For the time being, we are concentrating on another immediate political objective: free democratic elections in Iraq. We will outline details at the second resistance congress.

[DER SPIEGEL] There is still disagreement on whether the congress is to be held in Riyadh.

[Talabani] The term "disagreement" is exaggerated. We will probably not meet in Saudi Arabia, but in the freed Iraqi Kurdistan—inshallah.

Talabani Says State Using Napalm, Phosphorous

NC 2503203491 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1850 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Al-Hasakah, 25 Mar (SANA)—Helicopters belonging to Iraqi regime forces bombarded the two Iraqi cities of Dahuk and Karkuk with napalm and phosphorous bombs, resulting in the martyrdom of 20 Iraqi citizens, among them six children and a pregnant woman.

Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], said this in a statement to the SANA correspondent in al-Hasakah.

He added that the opposition forces succeeded in bringing down two helicopters during this attack and that the pro-regime forces have intensified their inhuman practices to quell the uprising in an attempt to retrieve the towns liberated by the popular forces.

The regime's forces attempted to regain control of the town of Khanaqin, but the revolutionaries confronted this force courageously and took them all prisoner, along with all their heavy weapons such as tanks, armored vehicles, and artillery.

Mr. Talabani affirmed that all of the northern regions continue to be under the control of the popular forces except for the city of Mosul and that the revolutionaries are in full control of large areas in the south, such as al-Diwaniyah, al-Nasiriyah, al-Samawah, al-'Amarah, and al-Kut.

He added that the popular forces are strongly confronting the regime's forces, who are trying to regain control of the holy cities of al-Najaf and Karbala', as well as the regions of al-Hillah and al-Mahmudiyah.

He clarified that many regions in Baghdad are scenes of large and wide-scale demonstrations like the ones taking place in al-Thawrah, al-Mashtal, al-Shu'lah, al-Kazimiyah, al-'Utaybiyah, and al-Hurriyah.

Mr. Talabani said that the tumultuous popular uprising in Iraq is the revolution of all honorable Iraqis. It is growing and developing every day in the north, the center, and the south. After liberating Dahuk, Karkuk, Irbil, and al-Sulaymaniyah, the opposition now controls large parts of the governorates of Mosul, Diyala, and Salah-al-Din. It is now working with full force to liberate the capital, Baghdad, until it finally reaches the last and most important stage, which is to topple Saddam's dictatorship.

Asked by the SANA correspondent about the policies of the opposition and the objective that unites its cohesive forces, Mr. Talabani said that all opposition forces that come under the joint action committee agree on forming a provisional coalition government representing all categories of the people in Iraq that would take over running the affairs of the country for two years during the transformational period. During this period this

government will work on providing democratic rights and liberties to all citizens, eliminating persecution and creating the appropriate bases for providing equality of rights and duties so that the Iraq of tomorrow will be a home of democracy, dignity, and pride.

Mr. Talabani affirmed that the current Iraqi government has caused many political, economic, and social crises in Iraqi society because it is a dictatorship that thinks of nothing but war and destruction. An example of this is the latest catastrophe the regime caused for Iraq and the Iraqi people: occupying the state of Kuwait, where it subjected these people and the army to humiliation, ruined the economy and isolated Iraq from the rest of the world. The people's revolution has begun to put an end to these crises and to save the homeland and the people from the inevitable death toward which the regime is leading them. We are confident that the will of the people will triumph in the end.

Kurdish Democrats Cable Support for Saddam

NC2603122091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1010 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has received a cable from the political bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], reiterating its support for him as he leads the effort to defend Iraq and its chaste soil.

The cable said: At this juncture, imperialist forces and their agents are ganging up to inflict the greatest damage on our homeland, after a U.S.-led 30-nation coalition executed a vile conspiracy to break the spirit of the striving Iraqi people, who, unperturbed by the heavy sacrifices involved, stood up honorably to the plot.

The cable added: Our proud Iraqi people have stood firm in the face of all the conspiracies hatched by imperialism and its agents, and managed to abort all attempts at sowing disarray and dissension thanks to their deep faith and their concern to safeguard the gains of the 17 July revolution led by struggler President Saddam Husayn. Our people will thwart all the conspiracies and plots wherever they originate.

The enlightened vanguard of our Kurdish people who have at all times taken the side of right and raised the banner of struggle behind your wise leadership will keep the pledge and continue to fly the same banner until our great homeland and Iraqi people realize their ambitions and hopes in a free, democratic Iraq. There is no doubt that traitors who receive their orders from the foreigner will be disappointed, as the people have exposed them for what they are.

'Popular Forces' Claim Downing of Helicopter

LD2503171691 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] An Iraqi helicopter was downed today in Dahuk Province. According to an IRNA report, a source from

the [Iraqi] opposition said: The helicopter was brought down in the region of (Fayyede) in the south of Dahuk Province.

According to the same report, popular forces managed to repulse Ba'thist forces' attacks, downed one of their helicopters, and forced another four to flee.

Forces Capture 2d Division Army Garrison

LD2503180791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] A garrison attached to the 2d Division of the Iraqi Army in the 'Ali al-Gharbi region was captured by the combatant popular forces.

A spokesman from the Iraqi opposition gave the news to the Islamic Republic News Agency, and added: During the operations a large number of vehicles, mechanical instruments, and various kinds of heavy and light weaponry were seized by the popular forces, and a group of soldiers and officers belonging to that garrison surrendered themselves and joined the popular forces.

According to the same source, the popular forces last night also ambushed one of Saddam's forces' tank columns, on the road between al-'Amarah and al-Kut, which was moving toward Baghdad. As a result of the attack one 155 mm gun and a number of vehicles carrying ammunitions were destroyed.

Opposition Reports Government Bombs Karkuk, Dahuk

LD2503184891 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Two bomber aircraft and five helicopters today attacked the city of Karkuk which is under the control of our insurgents. The attack took place at 0900 this morning and led to the killing of a large number of citizens. The insurgents downed a helicopter which, together with other aircraft, was trying to bomb the town of Dahuk, which is also under the control of our insurgents.

Meanwhile, the tyrant's regime has perpetrated a barbaric massacre in al-Basrah. The Revolutionary Guard in al-Basrah, Najaf, and Karabala used children, women, and old people as human shields in military operations. The Revolutionary Guard has been indiscriminately murdering children and old people. The sanitary and medical conditions in the three towns are very poor. Such conditions have a potential for real catastrophe.

A spokesman for the popular uprising has urged the coalition forces, led by the United States, to ban the regime from using aircraft to bomb residential districts and kill the innocent. According to the terms of the cease-fire, the tyrant's regime is forbidden to fly its military aircraft inside Iraq.

'Bloody' Clashes Seen in Al-'Amarah, Al-Najaf

NC2503184291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1610 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Damascus, 25 Mar (SANA)—A responsible source in the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI) affirmed today that the popular uprising against the Iraqi regime is continuing and has inflicted heavy losses on the regime forces.

The source said al-'Amarah and al-Najaf are the scenes of bloody clashes between the popular forces and the regime troops. Baghdad, he added, is under a stringent security alert as (demonstrations) continue in al-Kadhimiyyah, al-Amin, and Baghdad's al-Jadidah quarters, as well as in other neighborhoods of the Iraqi capital.

The source said the Iraqi regime forces launched intense attacks against the northern areas with heavy artillery shelling, using heavy weapons and incendiary bombs, and that the popular forces repulsed these attacks, inflicting heavy losses on the regime's troops. [passage omitted]

Masses, Revolutionary Committees Seize Garrison

NC2503202291 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1925 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Our masses who are in revolt, backed by the revolutionary committees, have attacked a large garrison of the 2d Division Headquarters. The camp was seized at 1600 today. Most of the camp forces joined the uprising, bringing all of their weapons and equipment.

Pilots Ask Iran's Permission To Use Planes

LD2503220891 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Iraqi pilots opposed to the regime and currently living abroad have asked the Iranian authorities for permission to use the Iraqi planes that are in Iranian bases for safe-keeping to confront the repression carried out by the authorities of Saddam's regime.

A report leaked from Iran says that Iran is expected to agree to the request if the situation in Iraq develops in a way that permits such an intervention.

Kurds Claim To Shoot Down Regime Airplane

NC2503154191 Paris AFP in English 1523 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 25 (AFP)—Kurdish rebels Monday shot down an Iraqi warplane over the northern town of Dahuk, a rebel group said here, reporting "very violent" fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan.

(In Baghdad, official newspapers said the army had "driven the insurgents out of several regions" in the north and that the rebels were being dealt a "stinging defeat.")

Kurdish anti-aircraft gunners shot down a warplane over Dahuk, north of Mosul, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan (DPK) said in a statement delivered to Agence France-Presse. It did not identify the type of aircraft.

The DPK, headed by Massud Barzani, also reported "very violent" fighting around Tuz Khurmatu and Kifri, south of Karkuk, a region where the army had deployed elite Republican Guard units, 80 tanks and 12 missile launchers.

Troops loyal to President Saddam Husayn used two warplanes and five helicopters to bomb the oil city of Karkuk, said another rebel group, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). In a communique released in Damascus, the PUK said "a large number of people" were killed or wounded in Karkuk, which Kurdish rebels said they captured last Tuesday.

The United States has shot down two Iraqi warplanes since a Gulf cease-fire on February 28, claiming they were flying in violation of the terms of the provisional truce. There was no confirmation of the latest reports from Tehran and Damascus, where the authorities have openly voiced their opposition to President Husayn.

(But in Baghdad, the ruling Ba'th party newspaper Al-Thawrah said the armed forces were "mopping up in towns and areas" of Kurdistan after having driven out rebels from several regions.

("The trouble-makers have suffered a stinging defeat," said another government newspaper, Al-Jumhuriyah. Both dailies quoted reports from its correspondents in the north.

(Allied warplanes, meanwhile, overflew the Iraqi capital Monday for the fourth consecutive day, a correspondent in Baghdad reported.)

Since last week, anti-government Kurdish groups have claimed control of almost all Kurdish regions in northern Iraq. Mr. Barzani, who is reportedly directing operations from the Iraqi Kurdish town of Irbil, urged the United Nations on Monday not to send its food aid through Baghdad.

Kurdish Forces Capture 5 Koreans, 7 Bangladeshis

LD2503185891 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The insurgents of the uprising in the north captured five experts from North Korea and another seven from Bangladesh when they took control on the day before yesterday [23 March] of an irrigation project near Karkuk.

A spokesman for the uprising said the captives are enjoying the hospitality of the Kurdistan Front and are treated well. He pointed out that their embassies in Turkey and Syria could contact them. The spokesman urged the international coalition not to return Kurdish Iraqi POW's for fear of them being detained by the tyrant's authorities as hostages in order to put pressure on the masses of the popular uprising in the north.

Baghdad Defenses Reportedly Being Reinforced

LD2503185391 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq
in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] In Baghdad, the tyrant Saddam continues to reinforce his defenses in the capital and around it. He has started to move a large number of tanks from the south toward Baghdad. Meanwhile, the insurgents of the uprising from the north are approaching the capital. The Republican Guard forces, loyal to the tyrant, are controlling the road leading to al-Basrah.

Government Forces Leave Al-Basrah for North

NC2503205091 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious
Iraq in Arabic 1925 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] In a desperate attempt to [words indistinct] in the regime's official institutions in northern and southern Iraq and to maintain the collapsing power of the regime in some pockets surrounding the cities in revolt, some armored vehicles and tanks of the government forces were seen withdrawing from al-Basrah and moving toward the north to face the state of collapse of the regime there, thus taking control of all the northern governorate away from the criminal regime.

These isolated attempts occur in some areas while the revolution is raging in others. The regime is completely paralyzed in its attempts to fill the vacuum in its military institutions, particularly after dozens of brigades have joined the ranks of the revolutionaries, bringing all of their weapons.

Clashes, Confrontations Continue

NC2503210491 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious
Iraq in Arabic 1925 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Steadfast al-Basrah is still the scene of clashes and confrontations between the revolutionaries and the remnants of the regime. The citizens are boiling with anger in preparation for deciding the situation.

Army Takes 20,000 Hostages; 'Acid Substances' Used

LD2503181191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] In order to consolidate its domination over the city of Mosul, the Ba'thist Iraqi regime has taken 20,000 inhabitants of that town as hostages.

From Orumiyyeh, quoting Iraqi opposition forces, IRNA also reports that popular forces attacked the city's

prison and freed 4,000 prisoners. These sources confirm that the Ba'thist Iraqi regime has used acid substances to crush the uprising of popular forces. The Iraqi opposition forces add that, when the popular forces controlled Aqrah, Bardarash district and the camp of Sharrah, an Iraqi brigadier general called (Hamid Muhammadiyah), together with five other officers, joined the popular forces.

Refugees Describe Situation in Southern Region

NC2403140291 Damascus Syrian Arab Television
Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] The Syrian Arab Television correspondent has sent us the following report from the Iraqi Safwan area:

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Iraqi refugees who managed to arrive at the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border point in the Safwan area today have emphasized that units from Saddam Husayn's forces are carrying out mass executions on the streets of the city of al-Basrah. They said that the regime's forces entered the city after they brutally assembled a ring of women and children around the tanks and tracked vehicles. But the popular resistance, according to these refugees, are still effectively continuing their rebellion in the city of al-Basrah and its perimeter.

The refugees said that the uprising forces are in full control of the al-Tannumah area on Shatt al-'Arab and that many attempts by the regime's so-called Republican Guards to enter this area have completely failed and that these forces sustained severe losses both in life and vehicles. A group of these refugees arrived in the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border point in the Safwan area this evening to join their colleagues at the camps of the International Committee of the Red Cross. It was noticed that the camps were crowded with refugees whose number exceeded the camps' capacity by several times.

Immediately after their arrival, the refugees demanded water, food, and medicine, stressing that they had not seen water and food for a long time because of the seriously deteriorating health and food situation. Some of them said that matters indicate that the Iraqi people will be exposed to starvation that may result in many more victims than those of the war, and that the Iraqi regime is only interested in shedding blood and establishing mass graveyards.

In interviews held by the news team of Syrian Arab Television and Damascus radio which will be aired later, these brothers affirmed that bodies are scattered on the streets of al-Basrah, al-Najaf, and Karbala', and that Saddam Husayn's guard forces are assembling young men before their homes and ordering their families to see them being executed.

These forces, according to the refugees, are using chemical weapons and cluster and napalm bombs. Others said that the forces of Iraq's hangman are striking holy tombs.

They added that they saw soldiers shelling Imam 'Ali's tomb, and that the men of the uprising know Saddam's goals well. He wants to turn the national popular uprising into a dirty civilian war. But let him know, the refugees said, that the Iraqi masses have decided to get rid of him and his men once and for all. This is 'Ali Jamalu speaking to you from the Kuwaiti-Iraqi borders. [end recording] [video shows armed civilian kurds in the streets of northern iraqi areas]

Paper Criticizes U.S. Cease-Fire Resolution

NC2603104091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0900 GMT
26 Mar 91

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Mar (INA)—The U.S. draft resolution before the UN Security Council for a final cease-fire to the Gulf war would rob Iraq of all the technological and scientific advances it has made over the years. AL-JUMHURIYAH writes.

In an article published today, the paper said the resolution's idea is to control Iraq's assets and resources for a long time to come. The U.S. aggression had sought to destroy Iraq's economic infrastructure, and the draft resolution sets out to put the finishing touches to that effort.

The components of the American draft are virtually Zionist-inspired because they were devised to advance Israeli interests and shackle Iraq with humiliating constraints, and thus eliminate a worrisome factor to Israel.

AL-JUMHURIYAH appealed to honorable Arabs and conscientious people worldwide to stand up to this unfair plan which seeks to impose limitations on Iraq for decades to come and damage the dignity and political and economic freedom of the Iraqis.

Arab lapdogs of the United States, who have rejoiced at the prospect of such a plan emasculating Iraq and paving the way for them to make concessions to the Zionists, will be held accountable by our Arab peoples. These lackeys will be made to pay for this new stab on top of their earlier treachery of siding with the aggressors against Iraq. If the UN Security Council passes the resolution, the Arabs will appreciate the full extent of the damage they will have suffered.

Paper Criticizes Silence Over Kuwait 'Massacres'

NC2503152391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1200 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH criticizes the international silence and total blackout on the mass liquidation of the Palestinians in Kuwait. In a report in today's issue, the newspaper, which expresses the views of the Defense Ministry, says that the circles of international decisionmaking, including the international, regional, and Arab organizations and institutions, remain silent about these massacres. They remain silent in spite of the increasing discoveries of mass graves containing large numbers of

Palestinians and despite the vivid indications of daily detention, torture, and harassment of them.

The paper draws the attention of the international and Arab community to the (official) and semi-official reports that the PLO obtained recently. The reports say that this liquidation has not stopped, despite the announcement by some members of the al-Sabah family that these are minor incidents that can be brought under control. The paper notes that one of these reports refers to the discovery of a mass grave of Palestinians in the area of (al-Ruqi) between Kuwait and al-Basrah, an area that is adjacent to the neighborhoods where the Palestinians were residing until the outbreak of the war. The PLO reports referred to other information about similar graves not yet found.

The paper adds that the massacres in Kuwait and the official international silence about them shed light on part of a previously designed plan, with U.S. and Israeli knowledge, to carry out these operations. The paper emphasizes that the timing of these exterminations, which started after the entry of the coalition forces into Kuwait, confirms this plan.

AL-QADISIYAH adds that reports indicate that the massacres of the Palestinians in Kuwait were and still are supervised by the coalition forces, particularly the Egyptian and Syrian troops, which have taken up positions inside Kuwait. [passage omitted]

The paper adds that even more disturbing than what is taking place in Kuwait against the Palestinians and the Palestinian issue is the attempt to tighten the noose around the PLO and undermine its role in defending and representing the Palestinian people. The paper notes that another goal behind this plan is to divert the attention of the PLO from the political deal that is being cooked up now by the United States to give Israel more freedom in influencing the Arab decision as well as the security and stability in the region.

Paper Cites Observers on Syrian Role in Region

NC2503180391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1345 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 25 Mar (INA)—Political observers have described Washington's backing down from its pledges to resolve the Middle East crisis as the greatest blow yet to the Damascus regime. The observers recalled Washington's success in dragging Syria into the coalition forces against Iraq and said that the United States has obtained everything it needs from Damascus and is no longer compelled to coddle it.

The observers, cited by the newspaper AL-QADISIYAH, reiterated that the U.S. Administration drove the Hafiz al-Asad regime into the trap when it falsely pledged that the peace process in the Middle East will be settled after the Gulf war and that Damascus will have an effective role in the settlement process.

The observers believe that (?Washington's) initial departure from its pledge is evident in its talk about the postponement of the peace process in the region and the return to the short steps policy better known as the step-by-step policy and which is favored by the Israelis. They pointed out that Washington has started to return, or rather returned, to one of the basic features in its foreign policy, namely Israel's victory regardless of [word indistinct].

The observers shed light on the alleged exchanges to establish peace in the Middle East. They said that although Israel has rejected the principle of an all-out settlement and what it has hinted about the short steps policy, it is not ready to return the Golan Heights in return for a bilateral accord between Damascus and Tel Aviv.

The observers scoffed at the strangling impasse into which the Damascus regime has fallen. They said that Tel Aviv is talking about signing an agreement with al-Asad but with far fewer conditions than they gave to al-Sadat in Camp David when Sinai returned to Egypt in accordance with this treaty.

The observers underlined that Tel Aviv clearly expressed its adherence to the Golan Heights when it rejected the land for peace principle. Furthermore, Shamir frankly affirmed Israel's adherence to the Golan as part of Israel's territories and repeated his blatant threats to the effect that all Tel Aviv can offer for peace is only peace. [passage omitted]

Test Flight of Arrow Missile Successful

TA2503173491 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 1650 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Another test of the first phase of the Arrow antiballistic missile was conducted today. The missile was successfully fired into the Mediterranean Sea from a ship. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe has the details:

The Israeli Arrow missile project, designed against tactical ballistic missiles, successfully completed a test flight of an interceptor missile in an Israeli test field. This is the text of the press release given to us by Dani Nave, the defense minister's adviser. The text had been jointly agreed upon by the Americans and the Israelis, and its timing had been coordinated with the Americans.

This was the Arrow's second test flight, which was designed to verify design and integration of the missile's components. The test flight is part of a research and development plan supporting the Israeli Government's decision to prepare a defense against tactical ballistic missiles in the region.

This time, the test was conducted from an Israeli Navy ship, from east to west in the middle of the sea, away from any populated area so as to prevent any problems. The test was observed by American representatives, Israel Aircraft Industries [IAI] top executives, and Israeli Air Force officers.

As previously mentioned, the missile was fired from east to west into the Mediterranean Sea. According to plans, the flight lasted for one minute, and then the missile was destroyed. The test was designed to test the ignition, guidance, and control systems. IAI engineers are now checking the missile's performance.

The previous test was conducted on 9 August 1990, a few days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. According to foreign publications, the missile had been destroyed within a short period of time—about five seconds—and the launch had not been complete. This time, all measures were taken to do away with the malfunctions of the first launch. The maiden launch in August signaled the end of the first development phase. The budget for this phase had been \$160 million, 80 percent invested by the Americans and 20 percent by Israel. The Arrow had not been not launched at any target in the air, but only to prove the technology.

The development phases will continue until 1995. The extent of the Israeli investment to complete the project is not yet clear. The budget the defense establishment will have to allocate is up to the U.S. Administration's decision about its share in financing the Arrow project. In the meantime, Defense Minister Moshe Arens has instructed the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to include the Arrow project in its multiannual work program. Minister Arens regards the Arrow project as a key component of his strategic perception. In his opinion, the issue of defense against ballistic missiles must be the most

important goal of the defense establishment. The latest developments in the Gulf and the missiles fired at Israel only enhance this goal and illustrate its importance.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in English at 1700 GMT on 25 March carries a report by defense reporter 'Alan Ben-'Ami, who adds that "two more tests are to be carried out later this year, including one in which the Arrow will seek to intercept a dummy ballistic missile."]

Malfunction in Second Stage

TA2503181191 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The second launch of the Arrow antiballistic missile was conducted this afternoon in the middle of the sea. Our military affairs correspondent reports that the missile completed its trajectory as planned for one minute, but notes that the test was only partially successful. A malfunction in the relay of data from the missile was detected during the second stage of the launch. Israel Aircraft Industries engineers are now checking the reasons for the malfunction. There is as yet no decision on whether to proceed with the project as planned, or to postpone the development plan. [passage omitted]

Arens: Two More Tests Upcoming

TA2603112991 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 1100 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens said there is a good chance that four Patriot batteries will remain in Israel. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that Mr. Arens told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that two U.S. batteries are already deployed in Israel, and a third will be funded by Germany. The fourth battery will be provided by the United States as part of the extraordinary military aid it promised in the wake of the Gulf war.

Referring to the Arrow missile, the defense minister said that another two tests are expected in the first stage, and after that funding for the second stage will be agreed on with the U.S. Administration. The United States is currently funding 80 percent of the Arrow's development budget.

Defense, Foreign Ministers on Deportation Policy

Arens: 'We Shall Not Hesitate'

TA2503152691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1400 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Report on interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by army affairs correspondent 'Amir Fink on 25 March; place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Fink] I do not think that there is any one single measure that could end the stabbing attacks by Arabs.

Nevertheless, this issue clearly is not solely the responsibility of the defense establishment. Both the police and the public will have to act, and we will have to employ a whole range of measures. This was asserted today by Defense Minister Moshe Arens.

[Arens] We are dealing with what is, in my opinion, a reasonably large group of people who do not attribute any importance whatsoever to human life. These people are brutal fanatics, or in one word: murderers. We shall have to employ a series of measures to cope with this problem. The public, of course, will primarily have to remain alert. Some people are trained, some carry weapons, and therefore I think that in the event of such an attack there is a high probability that one armed man, with the ability to handle the killer, could be found at the scene.

[Fink] Minister Arens said that the phenomenon of knife attacks could not be completely stopped in any case. He refused to comment on the proposals that will be raised before the cabinet this Wednesday [27 March].

As for the deportees, the defense minister said that no message has been received so far from the United States protesting the scheduled deportations that were announced at the beginning of the week. Arens said he assumed that there was a possibility of such a message being conveyed shortly. We are familiar with all the U.S. arguments on the matter, Minister Arens said, but the difference between us and them is that they are casual observers from far away while we are in the thick of it over here.

[Arens] I do not think that we should announce in advance whether we are about to step up or reduce deportations. We shall not hesitate to employ this measure whenever we reach the conclusion that it is required at the time.

No Change Despite U.S. Criticism

*T:2603045691 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 0405 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Report by Ze'ev Kohen]

[Text] Despite U.S. denunciations, Israel will not change its decision on the deportations of the four Gaza Arabs. We do not have a policy of deportations for the sake of deportations. Israel's decisions are based on security considerations. Official sources said Israel is taking measures to prevent attacks, murders, and terror, and implements various measures depending on the circumstances. To repeat, there is no policy of deportations; there is a punitive policy aimed at deterring and punishing those who carry out or are about to carry out dastardly acts such as those perpetrated last week.

The deportees have the right to appeal to judicial bodies and they are doing so. In the coming days, judicial bodies are expected to discuss the deportations, and Israel

hopes that the appeals will be rejected and the punishment enforced. The deportations, it is stressed in Jerusalem, are aimed at people against whom there is evidence that they act on behalf of terrorist organizations. To repeat, there are no mass deportations, but measures against people linked to murder and terror. Experience has shown that this method is a greater deterrent than other punishments, it was said in Jerusalem.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0400 GMT on 26 March says that "Israel called the UN secretary general's proposal to convene an international conference to discuss Israeli violations of the Geneva Conventions against the Palestinians a waste of time." The report also says that the reaction to the UN secretary general's proposal was made in a written response by Israel's UN delegation.]

Levi: U.S. 'Not Insensitive'

*T:2603054691 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 0405 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by Hayim Zissowitz—live]

[Text] [Zissowitz] When it was decided to deport the four Fatah activists, was the possibility of such a sharp U.S. reaction taken into account?

[Levi] We, of course, made that move based on our desire to curb incitement and actions that bring about murders, not only of Jews, but also of Arabs. We do not have a policy of deportation, but take measures that are called for when human lives are involved. What is really shocking is that what is happening is well known, yet nobody says that it damages the chances for peace. Can we imagine a situation in which Israel would say that as long as there are murders and terror, Israel will not participate in any peace move? It would be denounced by all sides. Therefore, I very much regret that the rules of the game are such that while Israel is defending itself, it is being denounced.

[Zissowitz] If, in the future, the need to deport Fatah activists—people linked to terrorism—arises, will Israel repeat that move despite the denunciations by the United States and the United Nations?

[Levi] Israel's policy opposes terror and takes a variety of measures and acts in several directions to that end. The day it caves in, peace will not be the outcome. Murders and terror will continue. There is no coexistence and no peace with terror. We must stand firm against terror. We must fight against terror. That is not only the right, but the duty of all governments. Just think what would happen if there were a terrorist act somewhere in the United States. All the sophisticated U.S. forces would be put into operation. Nobody would question it, and nobody would worry about how the peace seekers and humanists around the world might respond. We witnessed the murder of women, children, and innocent people, of trespassing into homes with the intention of

murdering Jews. All those things call for a multifaceted operation. We do not do it because of some policy, but to defend ourselves, to reduce dangers to people as much as possible.

[Zissowitz] Therefore, the U.S. denunciation, in your view, reflects a sort of U.S. insensitivity to our problems?

[Levi] No, no, no. God forbid. It is not insensitive. We must realize that the United States believes that there are things that might harm the peace process. If standing firm against terror and taking resolute action against it is an obstacle to peace, then Israel will have to raise its hand. We do not want that. We are not taking those actions lightly. The Jewish people know what deportations mean. It is more sensitive than any other nation, but it is also sensitive to its own life. I can provide examples, but now is not the time to settle accounts with enlightened countries. When we are talking about a war for liberty we must recall what Britain did to the freedom fighters. Freedom fighters in Israel fought but did not murder and did not destroy. Human lives were precious to us in comparison to these murderers. Any comparison between these murderers and beasts insults the fauna. They murder indiscriminately, even decapitate their own brethren, while they stab and murder our women in the center of our towns. Therefore there are rules, and if you do not act according to them, the wave of terror will continue. In no circumstances can it be compared with our desire and aspiration for peace.

[Zissowitz] Thank you, minister.

[Levi] Please excuse my excitement, but there seems to be a standard that when we are denounced we must throw up our hands in defeat and say that we are peace seekers and that therefore our lives are cheap.

PRC Consents to Upgrade of Legation in Beijing

TA2603085491 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew
26 Mar 91 p 3

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[Text] Foreign Ministry Director General Re'uven Merhav, on a private visit to China, met with senior Foreign Ministry officials, including the PRC deputy foreign minister. The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem, which wishes to downplay Merhav's visit to China, noted that in the framework of his stay in Beijing last week, Merhav acted for tighter and better ties between the two countries.

Merhav, who forged the first contacts between China and Israel during his term as consul general in Hong Kong in the 1980's, came to China after an official visit to the Soviet Union. The Chinese have given their consent to the upgrading of the Israeli representation in Beijing and to the free entry into China of Israeli nationals bearing an Israeli passport.

Arab Editor Urges PNC Elections in Territories

TA2503135991 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic
24 Mar 91 p 8

[By AL-FAJR editor Radi al-Jara'i: "The Wheat Field and the Threshing Floor Calculation in Palestinian Politics"]

[Text] Politics in general, and in the Middle East in particular, are subject not to static but rather to dynamic laws. The Middle East is a region of shifting sands, and the changes in it occur with immense speed. Events leave behind those who are not aware of the changes taking place or their effects on the political situation.

Politics always express the balance of power on the ground, but the balance of power does not just mean how many tanks and planes you possess compared to what the other side has. Other elements are involved in the balance-of-power calculation, such as the justness of the cause you are defending, the amount of international support, the existing alliances, and so forth.

As far as we in this heated part of the world are concerned, the recent series of dramatic changes we have witnessed has had an immense impact on our cause. We have to be aware of and absorb these changes at the appropriate time and deal with them wisely in order to avoid errors in achieving our national goals.

The military defeat inflicted on Iraq has left the balance of power in the region in favor of Israel. Consequently, Israel's fear of a costly war has dissipated. There is no longer any strategic element of pressure that would force Israel to abandon the occupied territories. Those following the Israeli leadership's statements can easily understand these facts.

As for the United States, it has consolidated its foothold in the region and has become the only determining power in the Middle East arena. True, leaving the Palestinian problem unresolved will continue to be a factor for anxiety that could cause America some difficulties in the region, and it will also remain as a factor for instigation by revolutionary forces in the struggle against U.S. imperialist influence and perhaps threaten some pro-U.S. regimes, but this factor will still be weak in view of the dictatorial regimes' consolidation of power in most Arab countries. In addition, the Gulf War proved that these regimes give more priority to their relationship with the United States than to supporting the Palestinian cause.

Therefore, perhaps the recent U.S. moves have been undertaken in order to contain the Arab masses' anger at the United States and its allied regimes, which sought to strike at Iraq, destroy its infrastructure, and paralyze its military power—particularly, because we are hearing U.S. statements to the effect that "the United States will not impose a solution on the region," meaning on Israel. This comes at a time when forces that the United States amassed to strike Iraq and oblige it to withdraw from

Kuwait by force, under cover of international legitimacy, are still in the Gulf with no official cease-fire having been issued yet.

This means that the United States is now totally biased toward Israel's position, as is the norm, and has made a mockery of the Arab regimes that were allied with it against another Arab country.

Moreover, the European position has become more firmly linked to the U.S. position than ever because of U.S. control over the Gulf's oil resources, which constitute the jugular vein for European and Japanese industry. Furthermore, the weight of the Soviet Union and its impact in the region has reached almost nil because of the stupid policy that the Soviet leadership adopted in the Gulf War.

Therefore, I do not see any real elements of pressure on the United States that would induce it to compel Israel to comply with the will of international legitimacy and implement the UN resolutions relating to the Palestinian problem, particularly Resolutions 242 and 338, which have unanimous international approval. I would not be surprised if the Israeli leadership were to advance the date of elections in order to avoid any pressure and to get quickly through this year in which the chances of peace and a solution of the Palestinian problem might become available.

As far as we Palestinians are concerned, we have been dealt a political blow as a result of Iraq's defeat, which has caused the PLO's position on the international level to be undermined. Nothing has remained in our hands except the intifadah card, which undoubtedly plays an important role in exposing the dual standard of the U.S. and UN positions toward the Palestinian people and their cause. This card also reveals the violations of the Palestinian's human rights to the world and places countries that call themselves democratic in a difficult moral bind.

But should we let things go on as they are and stand idly by with time not working in our favor, watching the events and not having any impact on them except shouting, yelling, and heaping insults on this or that one? Every day we are witnessing a flood of Jewish immigrants, the establishment of new settlements, and the expansion of existing ones. Will we suffice with the declaration of independence and with affirming that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative, while facts on the ground are changing rapidly?

As the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories—masses and leadership—we have to take the initiative into our own hands and adopt practical steps to advance our cause and pull the rug out from under any solution or plan that seeks to reinforce the occupation and divide the Palestinian people into those inside and outside the territories and into camps of those who support or do not support the PLO.

As a practical step, I propose that the current Palestine National Council [PNC] be dissolved and be formed anew with proportional representation for that part of the Palestinian people living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in accordance with the proportion of the population; and that elections be held in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under UN auspices to choose the delegates to the Palestinian parliament from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Thus, the PNC would represent all the Palestinian people and would express their unity wherever they are. In the event of any negotiations taking place, any participant in these negotiations will represent the PNC and, ultimately, the PLO, or in other words the Palestinian state. The second step calls for the formation of a provisional government or a government-in-exile that would include members from the West Bank and Gaza Strip (from among those elected to the PNC). The third step calls for supervision by this government of national institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, whether medical, social, educational, or religious institutions.

The fourth step calls for declaring a readiness to negotiate with Israel on the basis of UN resolutions and under international auspices for the sake of establishing peace in the region. Negotiations will be held with Jordan on setting up a confederation after the independence of a Palestinian state is achieved.

We should call on the countries of the world, the United Nations, and all peace-loving forces to support this plan and to convene a conference on the Middle East that would settle the region's other problems with Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan for the sake of establishing a comprehensive and just peace in the region that would serve all the parties.

Should Israel turn down all these steps, it would then be our right to ask the United Nations to issue a Security Council resolution that authorizes us and the international community to use all possible means to achieve our legitimate national rights and force Israel to withdraw from the Palestinian state's territory.

If, however, we continue only to raise slogans, this phase will pass, the world will become preoccupied with other issues, and we will stand still for scores of years. Will we move?

Comments on Peace Proposal

TA2503102191 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 0810 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Telephone interview with AL-FAJR journalist Radi al-Jara'i by moderator Razi Barqay and territories correspondent Arye Gus on the "It Is All Talk" program—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Barqay] What did you mean by saying you accept the UN resolutions? Are you publicly announcing your recognition of Israel, or are

you urging the PLO leadership to make a public announcement declaring its recognition of Israel?

[Al-Jara'i] I mean that the Palestinian nation is ready to talk with Israel on the basis of UN resolutions, and that includes a discussion of the Palestinian problem as a whole. I believe that recognition of Israel will ensue from the discussion.

[Barqay] That means that you are proposing a phased solution, the final stage of which will see two political entities: Israel on the one hand and a Palestinian state—or a Palestinian state in confederation with Jordan—on the other.

[Al-Jara'i] A Palestinian state alongside Israel. Afterward, we, the Palestinians, will be ready to create a confederation with Jordan.

[Gus] What do you mean by UN resolutions? Are you referring to Resolutions 242 and 338, or perhaps, as Palestinians and 'Arafat have already stated, to all the UN resolutions, primarily to the 1947 resolution on the partition of Palestine?

[Al-Jara'i] These are ideas; I presented ideas for talks. What I mean is that all the parties with an interest in this issue should participate in discussions of this plan. I think the ideas should be put on the table and discussed.

[Barqay] Then you are not excluding the 1947 resolution?

[Al-Jara'i] I am not excluding any resolution.

[Barqay] I see. You also called for the dissolution of the Palestine National Council [PNC] and for new elections. Is that because you believe that the Arabs of the territories have too minor a part in the Palestinian leadership? Because you believe that the PLO-Tunis has usurped your place in the PNC?

[Al-Jara'i] I believe there have been U.S. and Israeli allegations that the PLO does not represent the entire Palestinian people. Therefore, I decided to present this plan for holding elections in the territories to the PNC, in order to give the territories appropriate representation. We will thus be part of the PNC, and it will then represent the entire Palestinian people.

[Gus] Who are the residents of the territories you would propose for the PNC? Names, please.

[Al-Jara'i] I am not proposing names; I am proposing elections that will yield representatives.

[Gus] Radi, I have spoken with people in East Jerusalem who told me that this plan is in effect an attempt to attack PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, because the dissolution of the PNC will undermine him.

[Al-Jara'i] I do not think so. I believe that this will strengthen the PLO's position as the sole representative of the entire Palestinian people.

[Barqay] Many Israelis who are listening to this conversation are asking a question which to them is the most pertinent and poignant: What about terrorism? From what I have read of your plan, it makes no reference to Palestinian terrorism.

[Al-Jara'i] True, true. I am proposing a peace plan, not a war plan. A peace plan speaks of peace, not of terrorism and violence.

[Barqay] Are you calling upon the Palestinians, those who wield the knives, to stop? When will they stop?

[Al-Jara'i] I am saying that peace is the one significant factor capable of ending all violence between the two nations.

[Barqay] Radi al-Jara'i, thank you very much.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 24 March in a report by territories correspondent Udi Segal describes al-Jara'i as being "released from prison some two months ago after serving a two-year sentence for assisting what is known as the Unified National Command of the Uprising." Segal cites sources in the territories as telling him that al-Jara'i "is affiliated with Fatah" and that "he represents the young leadership in the territories that does not believe in the East Jerusalem leadership headed by Faysal al-Husayni."]

Comptroller Criticizes Shamir, Army on Gas Masks

*TA2503141491 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew
25 Mar 91 p 1*

[Report by Knesset correspondent Tova Tzimuqi]

[Excerpts] An argument broke out yesterday between Chief of Staff Dan Shomron, State Comptroller Miryam Ben-Porat, and the Knesset's Public Audit Committee, which launched a debate on the standard of the protective kits distributed to the public [before the Gulf war]. Although the general consensus was that no defective kits were distributed, the question was whether the masks provided adequate and proper protection, given the fact that, according to the standard, some of them were past their expiration date.

The state comptroller believes that 32 percent of the adult masks, or more than 1 million, were deficient and could not provide maximum protection. The committee members were also told that, in her report, due in May, she will level criticism at the political echelon too for failing to allocate the necessary funding for upgraded kits. She also levels criticism at the decisionmaking process on the matter.

The Voice of Israel has reported that the state comptroller ruled that the prime minister did not follow up on the execution of government resolutions, whereas the finance minister did not supply the required budget.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew, in a report by Eytan Rabin and Tzvi Zrahya on page A3, adds that Ben-Porat's report "severely rebukes the political echelon, especially Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, about all the political decisions on the kits." However, "the report does not address the current defense minister, Moshe Arens, and does not reprimand him." In its second part, "the report criticizes the army, but the army has placed part of the responsibility on the political echelon."]

The chief of staff vehemently rejected the comptroller's comments. He argued that the criticism did not analyze the statistical data properly. Although the expiration date on a large percentage of the masks was passed by a year, they still provided good protection. He claimed that in the opinion of the best IDF [Israel Defense Forces] experts and to the best of his professional knowledge, the civilian population received good and reliable protection, even though a larger budget would have enabled the purchase of still better protection. Shomron told the committee members: "Do you really think we distributed party masks? Would I dare distribute defective equipment?" [passage omitted]

As for the comptroller's report on the issue, the chief of staff and the comptroller recommended that it be published as part of Report No. 41, but under the limitations required for state security. The chief of staff was persuaded by most of the committee members to react, as most of the information had already appeared in the media. He agreed that as a result it would be better to react than to leave the matter open for interpretation. The comptroller supported that view, adding that perhaps if the findings of Report No. 39 had been published, many of them would have been eliminated.

[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 25 March, in a front-page report by Ya'ir Fidel and Gabi Bashan, adds that "the Defense Ministry and the Treasury are currently devising a multiyear plan to replace the filters on all the citizens' gas masks, for which approximately \$100 million has been allocated. This is because the filters become ineffective within a year after their seals have been removed."]

The committee will continue its deliberations on Wednesday and will hear additional explanations from government-level officials, the IDF, experts, and the state comptroller before it decides on the publication and effectiveness of the protective kits. The conclusions will be made public.

Arens Announces Likud Convention in Jan 92

TA2603114291 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
26 Mar 91 p A2

[Report by Menahem Rahat and Tzvi Lavi]

[Excerpt] The Likud convention will be held early in January 1992, by which date the party will hold internal elections, said Defense Minister Moshe Arens, the Likud

Secretariat chairman, in a closed meeting with senior party officials in his Tel Aviv bureau late last night.

Some time ago, a court ruled that the Likud Convention is to be held by March 1992, and that if the party fails to do so, its Central Committee will cease to exist. Minister Sharon demanded that the Central Committee be convened early next year, while the David Levi camp demanded that the convention be brought forward as much as possible.

Broad Likud circles believe that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his trusted ally Arens intend to postpone the Central Committee convention as long as possible, because the current situation is ideal for their purposes. [passage omitted]

Ministries Investment in Settlements Reported

TA2603115791 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew
26 Mar 91 p 2

[Report by Mikhal Qedem and Shlomo Slutsky]

[Text] The 1990-91 government investment in the territories is much larger than that in preceding years, the Peace Now movement claims. The Construction and Housing Ministry's actual budget in the territories stands at over 1.1 billion shekels.

Peace Now spokesman Ran Hayat said yesterday that his movement's team assigned to follow up on settlements in the territories has received reliable information on total national investment in the territories. According to him, a part of the investments—to the tune of tens of millions of shekels—came from budgets designated for the absorption of immigrants. The information includes, among other data, the sum of 50 million shekels from the budget of the Zionist Federation's settlement department, which is financed by the government.

According to Hayat, about 20 million shekels of the Immigrant Absorption Ministry's budget is invested in the absorption of immigrants in the territories under vague clauses. "When they write 'investment in the central district,'" said Hayat, "we do not know whether they refer to funds paid over for immigrants' language classes and absorption costs in settlements, or for aid to immigrants in greater Tel Aviv area."

Peace Now has further acquired data on other ministries' investments in the territories in the fiscal year ending in March 1991:

- Agriculture Ministry, whose budget for new settlement in the territories stood at about 40 million shekels;
- Ministry of Religious Affairs, which allots funds to various religious institutions in the territories and whose budget stood at about 6 million shekels;
- Tourism Ministry, which gave out grants in the total sum of about 1 million shekels;
- Education and Culture Ministry, whose budget for education in the territories stood at about 70 million shekels;

—Interior Ministry, which transferred some 40 million shekels to [Jewish] local authorities in the territories.

As of this year, the Energy and Infrastructure Ministry will finance the connection of Jewish settlements in the territories to electricity networks at a total cost of about 1 million shekels; this subsidy exists in the territories only.

The figures published by the Construction and Housing Ministry with regard to construction and infrastructure works in the territories show much smaller sums than alleged by the Peace Now report. Peace Now further charges Sharon with concealing many of his ministry's operations from the public in a bid to avoid criticism of the huge investments in settlements.

Peace Activists Call For 'Mutual Recognition'

TA2403055891 Jerusalem Domestic Service
in Hebrew 0500 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] The Israeli peace movements are drafting a document expressing a new position the gist of which is mutual recognition—by the Arab countries and the Palestinians of Israel's right to exist and right to security, and by Israel of the Palestinians' right to exist securely.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the document does not mention a Palestinian state at all, but does talk about territory for peace and the demilitarization of areas. The document has been drafted in anticipation of a large international peace convention planned by Labor Party doves and representatives of the Citizens Rights Movement, MAPAM [United Workers Party], Shinuy, Peace Now, and other peace movements. The organizing committee is chaired by Knesset Member Moshe Shahal.

Deputy Knesset President Receives FRG's Gysi

LD2103162991 Berlin ADN in German 1526 GMT
21 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Jerusalem (ADN)—During talks with Dan Tikhon, deputy speaker of the Israeli Knesset, Gregor Gysi, chief of the Party for Democratic Socialism [PDS], reaffirmed his party's call for a comprehensive ban on arms exports to Germany. Tikhon, who received the PDS delegation headed by Gysi in Jerusalem, stated during the meeting that it had been "a piece of luck" for German-Israeli relations that no poison gas produced with German help was used in the Gulf conflict. Tikhon said that the day of German unity was not a day of joy for many people in Israel. On 3 October many of them laid flowers at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial. Gysi assured his host that the PDS is conscious of its responsibility in the struggle against nationalism, super-power policies, anti-Semitism, and neo-Nazism. [passage omitted]

Polish Ambassador Calls For Improved Relations

TA2203111091 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 22 Mar 91 p 2

[Report by Greer Fay Cashman]

[Text] Polish Ambassador Jan Dowgiallo yesterday called for improved relations between his country and Israel.

Terming himself "the first ambassador of free Poland in free Israel," Dowgiallo urged executive members of the World Federation of Polish Jews to do more to encourage cultural and scientific exchanges between the countries.

Young Israelis should visit Poland not only to learn about the Holocaust, but also to see the positive side of Poland and to recognize that Polish youngsters are much like themselves, he said.

Dowgiallo was speaking at a luncheon at the Ramada Continental Hotel here where he presented Federation president and partisan veteran Stefan Grayek with the Golden Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland.

Underlining a significant change in Polish attitudes towards Jews, Dowgiallo cited a letter of January 20 "read aloud in churches all over the country" in which Polish clergy decisively declared itself to be opposed to anti-Semitism.

More recently, he added, the Polish government "clearly" expressed its opposition to Iraqi aggression against Israel, and even before that, President Lech Walesa appointed a council to fight antisemitism.

Dowgiallo, a geologist by training who took up his post last December, would personally like to see more scientific cooperation between Israel and Poland, but his government is presently interested in wooing Israeli investors and establishing joint ventures primarily in hotels and other areas of tourism.

Israel Arabic Radio Seen Losing Credibility

TA2603104691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 26 Mar 91 p 4

[Article by Khalid M. Sulayman]

[Text] As recently as a few years ago, the Arabic Service of Israel Radio (Sawt Isra'il) enjoyed a credibility advantage over most Arab broadcasting networks. Arab, including Palestinian, listeners did not trust Arab media, particularly radio and TV, which they perceived as mere mouthpieces for the despotic Arab regimes. (Electronic media in most Arab countries are owned and tightly controlled by the state.)

The Voice of Israel, along with such well-established and highly popular international radio stations transmitting to the Middle East as the BBC, VOA and Radio Monte

Carlo, often provided Arab listeners with more objective and accessible news coverage.

Today, however, the credibility gap between Sawt Isra'il and broadcasts originating in neighboring Arab countries is steadily diminishing. And since there has not been any qualitative or substantive change in the basic nature of Arab media, it was ironically the Arabic Service [of] Israel Radio that had to move Arab-ward. In fact, one may go as far as saying that Sawt Isra'il has already gone too far in trying to imitate and emulate Arab news broadcasts in their disregard of the accepted standards of objective broadcasting.

Indeed, if we put some slight variations aside, the Arab radio stations and Sawt Isra'il are increasingly looking like Tweedledum and Tweedledee. The conspicuous absence of the journalistic commitment to truth is no longer an Arab monopoly. The Arab voice of democratic Israel (and, to a lesser extent, the Hebrew voice, too) is becoming second among equals.

Some people may think it is grossly unfair to lump Sawt Isra'il with radio stations and broadcasting networks representing despotic regimes. Sawt Isra'il, many would argue, is the voice of a democratic country and government interference with the network is confined only to administrative matters. But the facts speak for themselves. In the last few years, Sawt Isra'il has deviated very much from objective broadcasting and resorted to a semi-propagandistic broadcasting pattern. Disinformation, propaganda, outright bias and blunt distortion have become recognized features in Sawt Isra'il's news programs.

A classic example of the disinformation disseminated by Sawt Isra'il (and Israel Radio) was their coverage of the Romanian revolution which toppled the late Stalinist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. For several consecutive days Israeli news broadcasts accentuated reports saying that Arab and Palestinian mercenaries were fighting alongside the Securitate and that dozens of Arab corpses were found in the streets of Bucharest and Timisoara. No other radio or TV networks gave weight to these reports. And, eventually, they were proven to be incredible and utterly false, especially after they had been denied by the new revolutionary government in Bucharest. Yes, the Arabs may have suffered a slight and temporary public relations damage. But the main victim of that short-sighted feat was the credibility of Israeli news media.

Now, what is the difference between this form of broadcasting and the pre-Gorbachev propaganda? In truth, there is no difference. And if this particular example can remind me of anything, it will remind me of a KGB attempt in 1985, on the eve of a non-aligned summit conference in Zimbabwe, to besmirch the U.S. image on the world arena by leaking a false report to a Harare newspaper suggesting that the HIV-Aids virus was in fact artificially made in secret CIA laboratories and intended to exterminate non-Whites.

But disinformation is just one blemish permeating Sawt Isra'il's news reporting. There are still more delicate and insidious forms of bias. The deliberate occasional mixing of straight news with views and the intensive use of tendentious phraseology and inappropriate euphemism—all contribute to the formation of a lamentable broadcasting trend adopted by Sawt Isra'il.

An analysis of Sawt Isra'il newscasts would reveal many deviations from responsible journalism. For example, when political statements by foreign visitors are reported by Sawt Isra'il, they are often misquoted, quoted out of context, overplayed, downplayed or ignored altogether depending on their proximity to the Israel positions and interests.

Thus when Guido de Marco, president of the UN General Assembly, visited Israel recently and made statements critical of the Israeli treatment of the Palestinians, Sawt Isra'il downplayed his pro-Palestinian remarks and instead over-emphasized his anti-Iraq utterances.

Moreover, Sawt Isra'il, in its coverage of the intifadah, often projected itself as a propaganda branch for the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. Deliberate distortions became the modus operandi of intifadah coverage. In fact, in the early months of the intifadah, Sawt Isra'il launched frenzied psychological warfare against the Palestinians of the occupied territories.

The Palestinians were constantly reminded that they had nothing to gain from the intifadah but everything to lose (Sawt Isra'il did not actually use the term "intifadah" until after six months had passed and instead referred to it as A'amal al-U'nf or acts of violence).

Likewise, news about an imminent collapse of the Palestinian economy and the rumored shutdown of many key Palestinian businesses and factories loomed large in Sawt Isra'il daily newscasts. Being essentially an advocacy medium, Sawt Isra'il readily assumed the task of rationalizing, justifying or downplaying the gravity and seriousness of the various actions carried out by IDF soldiers against Palestinians and intifadah activists. In assuming this task, Sawt Isra'il was bluntly and unashamedly one-sided. It was made to look like more of a larynx for the IDF than an informative organ of communication, a very ominous development that could eventually have serious ramifications on democracy in Israel and on the prospects of peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Still, Sawt Isra'il is not all-diabolic. Many of its broadcasts and public-service programs have granted their Arab (mostly Palestinian) audience a better understanding of Israel and the Jewish people. Palestinians still listen to Sawt Isra'il and continue to enjoy many of its programs and features. But, clearly, Sawt Isra'il non-political programs have a remarkable qualitative edge over its political programs.

Incidents Reported in Territories 25 Mar

TA2603115091

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 26 March, in a page A2 report by Eytan Rabin and Yizhar Be'er, writes: "Palestinian sources yesterday reported clashes with IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the Jabalyah refugee camp, where two residents were wounded, and in Rafah, Khan Yunus, and Gaza, where three more were wounded."

The report adds that yesterday the IDF lifted the 29-day curfew in the village of 'Awarta, south of Nabulus. The curfew had been imposed in the wake of numerous incidents in which stones were hurled at Israeli cars."

Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 26 March, in a page 4 report by Shraga Zeiger, adds that "two youths were injured by soldiers' gunfire in the al-Nusayrat refugee camp. They were hospitalized in al-Ahali Hospital in Gaza."

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 26 March reports on page 10: "A 16-month-old child was hit in the hip by a live bullet yesterday during clashes in 'Ayn Bayt al-Ma' camp in Nabulus." "Military sources confirmed the shooting and said the child was lightly wounded in the leg." An ITIM report on the same page writes: "An Arab janitor was stabbed at the edge of Jerusalem's al-Musrarah neighborhood last night, reportedly after being accosted by three Jewish youths." He was transferred to Hadassah-En Kerem Hospital, which said "he was not in serious condition."

Two Jailed for Refusing To Serve in Territories

TA2503185491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Two reservists have been sentenced to prison for their refusal to serve in the territories. 'Adi Laxer, 32, from Hod Hasharon was sentenced to 35 days in prison. Our correspondent Karmela Menashe notes that Laxer has been imprisoned before on similar charges. The second reservist is a paratrooper and a kibbutz member who refuses to have his name publicized. He was sentenced to 28 days in prison. To date, 135 soldiers have been brought to trial for refusing to serve in the territories.

Kakh Elects Qiryat Arba' Rabbi as Chairman

TA2403145491 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 24 Mar 91

[Text] Rabbi Avraham Toledano from Qiryat Arba' was elected chairman of the Kakh Movement today. There were no other candidates for the post at a vote held this afternoon in the movement's secretariat. A poll that was conducted later, found a large majority of the Kakh branch leaders supporting the vote. According to Rabbi Toledano, Kakh will run in the next Knesset elections on the basis of the political platform as drafted by Rabbi Kahana.

Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum notes that the son of the Kakh founder, Binyamin Ze'ev Kahana, quit the movement. He claims that the movement's institutions no longer have any legal authority.

King Returns From Working Visit to Syria

NC2603012891 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
0100 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn returned home last night [25 March] following a working visit to Damascus during which he met with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran and His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court, returned along with his majesty.

His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad held two lengthy meetings during which they discussed many bilateral, Arab, and international issues. The two meetings were attended for Jordan by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court. Attending for Syria were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

In an arrival statement, Prime Minister Badran said that an atmosphere of understanding dominated the talks between His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus. He also noted that views were identical on the various issues discussed, primarily the complete affirmation of the need to maintain the integrity of Iraqi territory and to safeguard Iraqi soil.

Badran Reviews Visit

NC2603072791 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
0600 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn returned home last night following a working visit to Damascus during which he met with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic. Prime Minister Mudar Badran and His Excellency al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Hashemite court, returned with his majesty. [passage omitted]

Prime Minister Mudar Badran made a statement following his return to Amman. He said that the talks between His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus were conducted in an atmosphere of understanding and that their views were identical on the numerous issues discussed. He added that at the head of these issues was their total emphasis on the need to preserve Iraqi territorial integrity and national soil. He said that the two leaders asserted that efforts to establish peace in the region must focus on the core of the conflict: a just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian issue that will guarantee the Palestinian people's rights, chiefly their right to self-determination and to establish an independent state on their national soil.

The prime minister added that the two leaders discussed in great detail the current stage through which the Arab nation

is passing. They affirmed their concern to overcome the ordeal and intensify the dialogue to formulate a unified stand on the challenges facing the Arab world. They also stressed their wish to build the Arab future on foundations that guarantee the nation's rights and liberty.

Badran said that the two sides expressed their desire to strengthen the institutions of collective Arab action, notably the Arab League, so that they can play their role in healing the rift caused by the Gulf war and in surmounting obstacles to collective action.

The prime minister concluded by saying that the meeting between the two Arab leaders was a good opportunity to discuss bilateral issues. They agreed to continue their consultations with a view to bolstering and developing bilateral coordination for the benefit of the two fraternal peoples.

Tutwiler Cited on State's Postwar Role

NC2603014291 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
0100 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] AFP reports that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker yesterday received Mr. 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah, his majesty the king's political adviser.

State Department Spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler, who announced the meeting, said that Mr. 'Adnan Abu-'Awdah will also meet with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft.

Mrs. Tutwiler added that despite disappointment with Jordan's stance during the Gulf crisis, the United States acknowledged that Jordan had a very important role in the search for peace and security in the region in the aftermath of the Gulf war.

Repatriated Citizens Report Torture in Kuwait

JN2603095491 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
26 Mar 91 p 3

["Special" to JORDAN TIMES by 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Amman—Two Jordanians arriving here from Kuwait have reported brutal acts of torture and other abuses exercised against them and many other Jordanians and Palestinians after Iraq's pullout of Kuwait last month.

"We have lived in a hell-like state for eight days, exposed to different forms of torture at the hands of paramilitary groups, and were finally thrown out at the border with Iraq where we succeeded in finding our way back to Jordan," said the two—Salah 'Abd-al-Rahim Sulayman, 19, and Muhammad Hasan Hamdan, 22, in an interview with the Jordan Times and Al-Ra'y newspapers.

"As soon as the ceasefire took effect, lots of armed men started roaming the streets of Kuwait arresting Palestinians, Jordanians and other nationalities, and I was among those who ventured into the street and was beaten

instantly by these armed groups," said Salah Sulayman, a student in a Kuwaiti school.

"The beating and torture started immediately after these people found that I was a Jordanian passport holder from Janin in the occupied West Bank," Salah added.

"The armed gangs started beating me with clubs and whips and used cigarettes to burn different parts of my body before detaining me in a dungeon in solitary confinement," Salah continued. "While torturing me, these people used very bad language, accusing the Jordanians and the Palestinians of conspiring against Kuwaitis after looting the country," Salah said.

"On the fifth day of my detention," he said, "I was taken to join 27 others who turned out to be Jordanians, Palestinians, Algerians or Sudanese." He said that "these were all dragged out of their homes and taken to special detention camps for torture."

"Only on the eighth day of our detention they dumped us at the border with no money and no clothes or other belongings," said Salah. He said: "We and the others walked most of the way to Baghdad passing decayed bodies of Palestinians, Iraqis and Jordanians killed in detention."

Salah said that the Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad supplied him with travel documents and the Jordan-National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) arranged for the trip back to Amman.

A similar experience was related by Muhammad Hamdan, a merchant dealing with ready made clothes. Muhammad said that he was captured on the third day after the ceasefire, while he was in the street, by armed groups who were rounding up Sudanese, Palestinians, Jordanians and Yemenis.

"The Kuwaiti armed gangs were assisted by Egyptian and Saudi troops who took me and many others to a school which was turned into a detention camp where we were tortured and beaten repeatedly," he said.

The two Jordanian men's stories were corroborated earlier by independent and American reports from Kuwait, which said that dozens of Palestinians and Jordanians had disappeared into a "secret web of interrogation, torture, detention, deportation and death."

Reuter News Agency said that many Kuwaitis had accused the Palestinians of collaborating with the Iraqi army during the seven-month occupation of Kuwait. Reports said that in an atmosphere of virtual gun law, people are taken at checkpoints manned by Kuwaiti army and resistance or taken from hospitals and homes. After an ordeal of days or weeks some have been shot dead and buried in unmarked graves, according to Reuter.

Last week, Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri told Parliament that the Jordanian government was holding contacts with the Kuwaiti government over the matter and

was trying to send a team of officials to help secure the safety of the Jordanian and Palestinian citizens.

Prince Hasan Interview With CNN Reported

NC2503195591 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
25 Mar 91 pp 1, 14

[By AL-DUSTUR correspondent Sa'id Nasir]

[Excerpt] Washington—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan has said that Jordan will issue a white paper soon to clarify its position on regional issues in a clear-cut and final manner.

In an interview with U.S. television network, CNN, he said: I would like to call on those who have cast doubt on Jordan's position to focus on the present and the future, and on avoiding the possibility of another war in the region in the coming months or years, which this time might be over a conflict on water, not oil.

His highness stressed that Jordan's credibility among Jordanians and Palestinian has never been better. He said: We are committed to the basics of Resolutions 242 and 338, which Jordan helped draft.

He said: During the Gulf crisis, we played an independent role. We were neither against nor with the United States, and we certainly are not in favor of the occupation or annexation of Kuwait. We, however, regret the suffering of the Iraqi and Kuwaiti peoples.

With regard to the U.S. Senate decision to stop some of the aid to Jordan, his royal highness said that this decision is regrettable, especially since it comes in light of Jordan's commitment to peace in the Middle East. He added that speed in seizing the opportunity now to establish Arab-Israeli peace and Palestinian-Israeli peace is vital to all of us. I think that we only have months ahead of us, he said.

His highness expressed his appreciation of President Bush's statement in which he showed readiness to utilize the condition contained in the decision to stop the aid, namely that Jordan participate in the peace process. He said: I think that the faster we define the objectives of this process, the better.

His highness, who is visiting San Francisco, California, was asked about the meeting between His Majesty King Husayn and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz. He said he believed the meeting was different from previous meetings, especially in light of developments in Iraq.

His highness added that, according to a UN report, Iraq had reverted to the preindustrial era after the war and that the situation is paralyzed. He said that it is now a fight for the existence of 18 million Iraqis, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds or beliefs.

Replying to a question, His Highness Prince Hasan said that Jordan does not interfere in any of Iraq's domestic

affairs, and that the Jordanian people are strongly in favor of the prosperity of the Iraqi people.

Asked to comment on the importance of the recent Iraqi Government reshuffle, his highness said it was a development aimed at expanding the participation of the people's groups in the government, and establishing a multiparty system and democracy.

His highness added that in Iraq now there are no communications, electricity, or water. The outbreak of epidemics because of polluted water might be next. It seems to me, he said, that we focus a great deal on changes and reshuffles, but give no mention or due attention to what the country is suffering from.

Asked whether he thinks President Saddam should relinquish power, His Highness Prince Hasan said: If this is a condition imposed by the outside world, I would like to remind those who think about this issue that there are problems in the north, center, and south of the country, and that there is no alternative to the Iraqi Government unless the aim is to destroy the unity and integrity of Iraqi territory. [passage omitted]

Authorities Unloading Syrian Oil at Al-'Aqabah

NC2503133591 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic
1200 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The appropriate authorities at al-'Aqabah Port have begun unloading the oil cargo on board the oil tanker (Baramis) which arrived in port yesterday from the Syrian port of Baniyas. The tanker carries 44,000 tonnes of Syrian oil, which is a portion of the oil covered by a contract concluded by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Wealth with Syria.

Over the past two days, four ships have arrived at al-'Aqabah Port. One of them, a Cypriot ship, is carrying 49,000 tonnes of barley, and the other, an Indian ship, has 559 containers of goods for the Jordanian market. The other two ships are empty. The first, a Romanian ship, will carry calcium carbonate for Algeria; and the other is to carry steel plates to the European markets.

Sweden Grants Palestinians Aid; Envoy Comments

JN2603104291 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
26 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Swedish government has granted 25 million Swedish crowns (\$4.1 million) in emergency aid to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The grant is intended primarily for food and health care and will be funneled through the UNRWA and Diakonia, a Swedish church charity organisation which operates a major rehabilitation centre in Ramallah, according to a press release issued by the Swedish Embassy in Amman.

"The Palestinians in the occupied territories are among those hardest hit by the Gulf crisis because of diminished or cancelled aid programmes and prolonged curfews,"

said Sweden's minister for international development cooperation, Mrs. Lena Hjelm-Wallen in a comment.

The new decision brings Sweden's emergency aid to the Middle East victims of the Gulf crisis to a total of \$53 million.

Iraq Asks Jordan To Resume Telephone Links

NC2003114191 Amman PETRA-JNA in English
0855 GMT 20 Mar 91

[Text] Amman, March 20 (PETRA)—Iraq has requested Jordan to repair and resume telephone, facsimile and telex facilities as well as postal services between the two countries, and this is expected to be done by next week, AL-RA'Y said Wednesday.

The paper attributed the information to Dr. 'Abdallah Jazi, head of the post office and postal savings corporation. Dr. Jazi was quoted as saying by AL-RA'Y that Kuwait had not asked for any resumption of similar services.

UN Urged To Abrogate Embargo Resolution 661

NC2403131191 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
24 Mar 90 p 1

[Editorial: "What is Required is Abrogating Resolution 661, Not Reducing Economic Sanctions on Iraq"]

[Text] The UN Security Council's slackness and slowness in lifting the economic embargo on Iraq cannot be free of evil intentions that aim at keeping Iraq under a state of siege, exposing its people to starvation and fatal diseases, depriving it for an extended time of the chance to develop and progress, and robbing it of the chance to reconstruct the vital cities and institutions that were destroyed by the mad raids of the aggression alliance.

Permitting the entry of food, medicine, as well as equipment to restore water and electricity networks through earlier approval by the Security Council is not an alternative to lifting the economic embargo and abrogating Resolution 661. Moreover, it will neither reduce the pressure of the economic sanctions nor reduce the dangers that threaten the Iraqi people.

As Crown Prince Hasan said in his speech at Tamalpais Institute, San Francisco, we must find means to reconstruct Iraq immediately and with no delay. The fact that the lives of 18 million Iraqi people are being threatened by the spread of epidemics will not relieve the Arab states or the entire international community from assuming responsibility, because the suffering of the Iraqi people is felt by Arabs everywhere.

Thus, the UN Security Council is urgently asked to come out of the circle of U.S. hegemony and not yield to the pressure of the alliance countries. It should rapidly—with no hesitation or slowness—abrogate Resolution 661 and lift economic sanctions on Iraq. It should also be

concerned with protecting Iraq's unity—homeland and people—and tackle the results of the 30-country aggression with no hesitation.

It is known to the international community and the big countries—foremost being the United States itself—that the credibility of the Security Council, along with all its organizations and bodies, has become subject to doubt, and that it is now facing a difficult test.

World peoples have noticed that the Security Council, under the influence and pressure of the aggressive alliance countries, dealt with the Gulf crisis with a standard different from that applied to the rest of the regional issues—especially the Palestine question—which undermined its credibility and subjected it to doubt.

Will this important international organization reconsider its positions and rush to lift the economic embargo, so that Iraq might reconstruct what was destroyed by the U.S.-Zionist-Atlantic aggression in its capital and other cities?!

U.S., Israeli Aims in Region Criticized

NC2403134991 Amman AL-RAY in Arabic
24 Mar 91 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "A Conspiracy To Disarm the Arabs"]

[Text] The UN Security Council has to date been unable to issue an official resolution on the cease-fire in the Gulf although several weeks have passed since the end of the war there. It is clear that this delay is due to U.S. desires to impose arbitrary conditions on Iraq in the resolution. It is surprising that the Arab reaction toward these conditions is only silence. It is noteworthy that the implementation of these conditions means nothing less than Israel becoming the only dominating regional power.

It is important to bear in mind that the U.S. requests to destroy Iraq's nonconventional power are not accompanied by similar ones that call on Israel to destroy its nonconventional weapons, despite the fact that Israel has refused and continues to refuse to have its nuclear installations inspected, and the fact that Iraq did not use any nonconventional weapons during the Gulf war.

Moreover, we must bear in mind that this issue is linked to a comprehensive political settlement to the Arab-Israeli problem, not to issuing a cease-fire resolution with Iraq. Thus, discussing this issue now isolates it from the real requirements for establishing peace and stability

in the region. It is clear that the essence of these requirements requires giving the Palestinian people their occupied lands and the right to self-determination over it. The chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the French National Assembly has mentioned this fact in an article to be published in Paris tomorrow.

On the other hand, it is noticed that the U.S. desire to disarm Iraq is now accompanied by Israel's implicit call to limit Syria's military capability. General Dan Shomron, Israeli chief of staff, announced a few days ago that Syrian missiles threaten Israel, and that if Syria continues to seek a strategic balance with Israel, then it will remain a threat to Israel.

Thus, it is clear that the attempt to disarm Iraq to issue a cease-fire resolution is only a prelude that raises fear about U.S. fabrication of pretexts to disarm other Arab states. The Arabs must be aware of this evil attempt. They must adopt a responsible position on Iraq's side that wards off the conspiracy to disarm it. No doubt, the Arabs realize that weakening them militarily means subduing them to Israel's plans. It also means that Israel would have the only role in the region. Most Arabs have not forgotten what Shamir said a few days ago that during any negotiations, establishing Greater Israel will be his dream and belief.

The Gulf war has ended, but the U.S. war against the Arab nation has not. Rather, it has entered a new phase represented in disarming the Arabs, starting with Iraq, the same way it started the Gulf war by destroying Iraq's infrastructure. If the United States and Israel became involved in the Gulf war as a pretext to propagate claims on Iraq's threat to the region, then what pretexts could Israel fabricate to support its complaints of the Syrian threat of which Shomron spoke?!

The Arabs are called upon to issue a proclamation ending the Gulf war and to announce that they are the ones concerned with dealing with Iraq, and that no one else has the right to do this on their behalf. In that way the Arabs could begin to heal their wounds and confront the suspicious plans that aim at disarming them, starting with Iraq!!

Reportage on Prince Hasan's Visit to Canada

W425031520901

For reportage on the visit by Prince Hasan to Canada, including reports on his talks with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Joe Clark, please see the Canada section of the 25 March West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Source Says Hostage Issue at 'Standstill'

NC2503103791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1015 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] A source knowledgeable on the issue of the hostages has asserted to the Voice of Lebanon that there is nothing new in this respect. He pointed out that the issue remains at a standstill.

Hostages Anderson, Waite May Be Released 'Soon'

PM2503161591 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 22 Mar 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Reports Expect Release of Anderson and Waite"]

[Excerpts] Beirut, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—In a new escalation, an Israeli commando group yesterday attacked al-Luwayzah village in Iqlim al-Tuffah in southern Lebanon and opened fire on a vehicle, killing two people. [passage omitted]

At another level, sources close to the captors of the Western hostages in Lebanon have said that Syrian-Iranian contacts over them have made tangible progress and that some of them will be released soon. The sources did not rule out the possibility of Terry Anderson and Terry Waite being released within days.

The sources said: There have been a number of encouraging signs in recent days, and progress has been made in behind-the-scenes contacts, which dealt even with matters beyond the issue itself. In Damascus, the official newspaper AL-THAWRAH yesterday described the Lebanese Government's decision to disband the Lebanese militias as a courageous and important step. [passage omitted]

Hizballah Source Defies Decision on Militias

NC2603130291 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Commenting on the government decision to dissolve the militias and freeze the resistance's role, a leading Hizballah source has stressed that the party will not be a false witness to what is going on and, consequently, will not legitimize Israeli occupation of a dear part of southern Lebanon. In a statement to the newspaper AL-DIYAR the source wondered if the Israeli occupation of the South is over, so that it can be said there is no need for the resistance. He pointed out that the announcement on the abolition of the resistance nullifies justification of the government statement that brought it into being. One of the statement's articles called for backing and activating the resistance role to complete the liberation of what remained of southern Lebanon. The source said that Hizballah agreed on the establishment of Greater Beirut because our stand basically seeks to consolidate domestic stability.

Responding to the argument that leniency toward the presence of weapons in a certain area will justify the existence of arms in another area or with certain organizations such as the Lebanese Forces, the Hizballah source said: This argument is not precise, because the Lebanese Forces agreed on the al-Ta'if accord which provides that the legitimate authority can seek the help of the Syrian forces to implement the al-Ta'if accord. This nullifies the justification for these forces to retain their weapons to stand up against the army. This means that in Lebanon there is only one enemy, the Israeli one, that constitutes a danger to Lebanon. The al-Ta'if accord consecrated the resistance's role against Israel and this necessitates that the Lebanese Forces stand up against Israel. If the Lebanese Forces adopt this stand, we have no objection and we welcome the Lebanese Forces in the trench of confrontation against Israel.

The Hizballah source went on to say that the Lebanese Government has thus far not put forward a practical plan for the liberation of southern Lebanon from occupation which would force Israel to withdraw once and for all. Also, we want to know the government's real plan for liberating the south. Will this take place by the army or by (UN) Resolution 425? If the matter is serious, we are prepared to support the army if it is an army that fights and resists the enemy. The statement that the resistance is over is hasty and is not based on logic. We say unequivocally that if we were to choose between being traitors or supporters of liberation of our land, we would choose the latter and will defend it with all our might. It is inadmissible for us to let the blood of our martyrs and strugglers go in vain.

The source said: We want a clear concept and a certain guarantee for our people, land, and villages in southern Lebanon. It is insufficient for us that Israel withdraw from southern Lebanon. We want to ensure all conditions of security and stability, because it is unreasonable to agree that the sons of southern Lebanon remain exposed to bombardment and aggression within the hearing and sight of the world. Our experience in this respect is obvious: The sons of southern Lebanon have been subjected to aggression and bombardment, and tampering in their future since the mid-forties. Therefore, we want to know the army that will take over security in the South. Will it secure the stability of the people in that area? If it does so, we will be its soldiers, otherwise we will confront the army in order to establish our right and option to defend our kinfolk and land.

Al-Tufayli Wants To Confront Saddam, Americans

NC2503191891 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli has emphasized: Our future responsibility is great, and we are up to it. We are certain we will liberate our country and purge it of the filth of infidels and their agents. We are not affected by the infidels' show of force because they are weak against the faithful.

At a ceremony in the town of Britral to mark the third day of the martyrdom of brother Husayn al-Tufayli, his eminence said that Saddam, who only recently was an adversary of America, is today turning to it as a loving brother so that he will be able to crush the Muslim people in Iraq. This aggrieved country, he added, is watching a game played by criminals, murderers of arrogance, and Saddam.

He said: The worst is yet to come, and the predicament will last for a long time. We must stand with our kinfolk and the people to confront the Saddam regime and the Americans. He noted that nothing is left for the agents to conceal their agency.

The Hizballah secretary general commented on the situation in Lebanon, saying: Some may imagine that the current phase is in favor of America and Israel, but we say: Anyone who wants to be an Israeli should speak up, and anyone wanting to be a man of resistance should also speak up. We will not agree that Lebanon, particularly southern Lebanon, will be a security zone for the Zionist enemy. Al-Tufayli remarked that those who encroach upon the resistance and its martyrs are no more than agents. We can see nothing else in them, he said.

Al-Husayni on Legitimacy of National Resistance

*NC2603090591 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic
0530 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni has stated that the current controversy over the issue of national resistance is damaging the national consensus to confront the Israeli enemy. He emphasized that in his recent statement on the issue, President Ilyas al-Hirawi was not referring to the national resistance against the Israeli occupation.

Al-Husayni said that it goes without saying that every nation has a legitimate right to resist occupation and every Lebanese is proud of this resistance. He noted that the Lebanese resistance has provided an excellent example to the world because since the beginning of operations in 1982, not a single Israeli civilian, woman, or child had been targeted. All operations have been directed against the occupying forces. He added that the Lebanese resistance is the first resistance force in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict and that resistance is the right and duty of every Lebanese.

Al-Husayni said that the government statement, which came as part of the implementation of the al-Ta'if agreement and the national charter, has clearly expressed the cabinet consensus, under the chairmanship of his excellency the president, on this issue. He added that, consequently, when we adhere to international legitimacy and the UN Security Council resolutions which express the international community's will, we also cling to our right to resist the Israeli occupation of our land. Speaker al-Husayni is expected to leave for Damascus today to meet with a number of officials there to discuss developments.

Phalangist Meets Premier, Sees 'Positive' Climate

*NC1903173291 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1515 GMT 19 Mar 91*

[Text] Engineer Alfred Madi, member of the Phalangist Party's Political Bureau, has said after meeting Prime Minister 'Umar Karami that the atmosphere is positive both internally and externally. He said that ending the boycott depends on negotiations and the general climate. He hoped there would be a final answer from the government in the near future regarding the stand of the Phalangist Party and the Lebanese Forces. Madi called for exploiting the positive aspects of the climate of reconciliation emerging in the region which should be put into practice soon.

Counterfeiters of U.S. \$100 Bills Arrested

*NC2003022591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1515 GMT 19 Mar 91*

[Text] The Military Police have arrested some people suspected of circulating counterfeit U.S. \$100 bills. The National Defense Ministry's information department issued the following statement this afternoon:

The Military Police arrested on 16 March some persons suspected of stealing cars and other crimes. During their interrogation, it was confirmed that they were involved in circulating counterfeit U.S. \$100 bills. When the investigation was expanded, Fadi Khalil Haykal, Najib Fu'ad al-Sabbagh, Munir Jiryis 'Awn, Gilbert Samir Jabbur, 'Aziz Ibrahim Ma'luf, Nimr George al-Tan, and Joseph Tanius Harb were arrested. It became clear later that some of those arrested have police records and were referred to the special courts.

Jordan's King Husayn Arrives in Damascus 25 Mar*NC2503153591 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1515 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn Ibn-Talal, monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, arrived in Damascus at 1600 today on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. President Hafiz al-Asad led those who received him at Damascus International Airport. He was also met by Vice Presidents 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam and Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; deputy prime ministers and ministers; the Syrian ambassador in Amman; and the Jordanian ambassador in Damascus. His Majesty King Husayn is accompanied by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and al-Sharif Zayid Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court.

His excellency the president and his majesty the king left the airport in an official motorcade to Tishrin Palace, where they held a meeting. It was attended on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. It was attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court.

Meets With Al-Asad*NC2503200591 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1915 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and His Majesty King Husayn resumed their talks at a meeting at the Presidential Palace this evening. Attending on the Syrian side were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. On the Jordanian side were Prime Minister Mudar Badran and al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court.

Concludes Visit, Departs*NC2603080191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0515 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Excerpts] President Hafiz al-Asad and His Majesty King Husayn resumed their talks at a meeting in the Presidential Palace yesterday evening. Also attending the meeting on the Syrian side were Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Attending the meeting on the Jordanian side were Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Chief of the Royal Court al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir.

The talks dealt with the Arab situation in general, the situation in the Gulf, the results of the Gulf war, and with the peace proposals being discussed in the international arena. [passage omitted]

His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal, monarch of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, left Damascus last night following a one-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. President al-Asad saw King Husayn off at the airport as did Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Vice President Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the deputy prime ministers, ministers, the Syrian ambassador to Amman, and the

Jordanian ambassador in Damascus. President al-Asad accompanied His Majesty King Husayn in an official motorcade from the Presidential Palace to the airport.

Visit 'Cut Short'*NC2603005991 Paris AFP in English 0036 GMT
26 Mar 91*

[Excerpts] Damascus, March 26 (AFP)—King Husayn of Jordan cut short a visit to Syria without explanation Monday night after holding two rounds of talks with President Hafiz al-Asad. Syria's SANA news agency reported.

The king, on his first visit here since November 1988, arrived in the afternoon for what was billed as a two-day stay, but left for Amman late in the evening. Mr. al-Asad accompanied him to the airport. SANA reported.

King Husayn and Mr. al-Asad held two meetings interrupted by the "iftar" meal, breaking the Moslem dawn-to-dusk fast during the month of Ramadan. [passage omitted]

A Jordanian official said Damascus and Amman had "similar points of view on the Arab-Israeli peace process and the need for the Jewish state to liberate the territories it occupies before establishing peace." He said both countries agreed the Palestinian issue could not be handled separately from the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Al-Asad Receives Speaker of Lebanese Assembly*NC2603170091 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1615 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Text] At 1645 this afternoon, President Hafiz al-Asad received Husayn al-Husayni, speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam attended the meeting. Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received al-Husayni at 1230 today. They discussed the situation in Lebanon and in the region in light of the outcome of the Gulf war.

Al-Asad, Al-Qadhdhafi Discuss Regional Issues*NC2103063491 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0515 GMT 21 Mar 91*

[Text] Last night President Hafiz al-Asad received a telephone call from Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September Revolution in Libya. The two leaders held talks on the situation in the region.

UK's Hogg Discusses Visit, Mideast Issues*JN2103115091 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English
14 Mar 91 p 5*

[By Hisham Bukhari]

[Text] The Minister at the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Mr. Douglas Hogg, currently visiting the country said when interviewed by an ST [SYRIA TIMES] correspondent that he has come to Syria to

contribute to strengthening the Syrian-British relations in particular and the Arab-British relations in general.

Asked about the aim of his visit to Syria and what he has achieved during his talks with the Syrian officials, Hogg said that "the purpose of my visit to Syria is to familiarize myself with the views of the Syrian government and also to mark the fact that we do wish to establish a good working relationship with the Syrian government. Our relations have been broken for a number of years and I am glad that they are resumed and I think that the achievement is good. We had very friendly talks, we recognize that we have substantial number of interests in common and that is a progress".

Asked about his opinion on the current moves in some Arab and world capitals with the aim of establishing peace in the Middle East while Israel on the other hand continues stubbornly to reject the idea of holding an international peace conference and to refuse the UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, Mr. Hogg commented by saying: "Well to start, everybody has got to be flexible on those matters. You have to take Arab public opinion with you and the Israelis have to take their public opinion with them because any agreement without the support of the relevant peoples will not last. We approach the matter on the basis that any final agreement has got to incorporate within it the principles of the two UN resolutions 242 and 338. And that any settlement has got to provide for a safe and secure future for Israel as well as for self-determination and political rights for the Palestinians, and that can only be achieved by negotiations; and therefore the essential question is how to get the parties to agree. I think that a conference has a part to play, but it is important not to call the conference too soon. This is an urgent matter but it must not go wrong. And therefore, I think that there is quite a lot of preparatory work that needs to be undertaken urgently before the time is ripe for the conference."

Asked to what extent Israel can be flexible as long as "we" have never noticed any sort of flexibility on the part of Israel, Mr. Hogg commented by saying: "If there will be no flexibility on the part of Israel, it will be extraordinarily difficult to achieve a settlement, and Israel is deeply concerned about her security, but we want to persuade Israel of the concept of the "land for peace", that is to say there is no security for her in occupying the occupied territories. We believe that she has to leave the occupied territories, so as to give the Palestinians their political rights. And there need be an acceptance of that principle on the part of Israel."

On the question of the current calls for disarmament in the region specially regarding mass destruction weapons, Mr. Hogg said: "Well, so far is the obvious weapons of mass destruction that is the nuclear weapons, and the biological weapons and the chemical weapons. Those are already covered by international conventions, and I think that those international conventions do need to be tightened up. So far as for the conventional weapons, I think it is very important that the supplying nations

recognize the dangers of supplying very substantial quantities of conventional arms to areas of the world which are highly volatile and that requires agreement on the part of the supplying nations. But the truth really is that until you get an agreement on this, which makes people feel confident in their security, it will be very difficult to prevent peoples acquiring weapons and therefore our first objective must be to try and bring about the wider peace settlement from which other things will flow including an acceptance of the need for more limited arsenals.

Asked if he thinks Israel would be forced to accept the UN resolutions 242 and 338, Mr. Hogg said: "Well, I am not sure that I would use the word 'forced', we are in the business of persuasion, because it is very important that the people in Israel come to accept that there is no security for them in terms of occupying the occupied territories. And, of course, things have happened in the last two months, the fact for example that they were attacked by Scud missiles notwithstanding the fact that they were in the occupied territories, and this is a process of persuasion "an urgent process". And the Arab states do have an important part to play in this process, because people have got to move voluntarily to an agreement." Asked if the world is going in any way to confront Israel as it did with the Iraqi regime when it rejects UN resolutions, Mr. Hogg added: "I do not think I want to talk in terms of paradox, but I certainly expect Israel to realize that it is very important to accept the principles of the relevant Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Israel must recognize that her security does lie in an agreement with the Arab states and that such an agreement will not occur unless she withdraws from the occupied territories and unless the Palestinians determine their own political future, may be in a relationship with Jordan, may be not; that is a matter for them to choose."

Asked about his opinion concerning the fact that nowadays there are two concepts in the Gulf region: the first advocates that the security of the Gulf region is the job of the countries of the region; while the second concept advocates that the security of the Gulf region is the job of the pan-Arab national security, Mr. Hogg said: "I think that primarily that the Gulf security is the responsibility of the regional powers in and around the Gulf states. I welcome very much the Damascus Declaration and I think that this was extremely a step forward. And I welcome too the fact that Syria and Egypt have both of them decided to place troops together with a view to ensure the security of the Gulf region."

Asked if he would characterize the relations between Syria and Britain, Hogg said: "We would very much like to see good relations with the Syrian government, very good relations. We have had bad relations in the past four or five years and it would be foolish to pretend that

we haven't. At the same time we do have a number of serious interests in common where there is an overlapping interest. And we want to work together with the Syrian government. So what I would like to think when I leave Syria today that I have played a small part in establishing a good working relationship with the Syrian government."

Asked about whether economic ties with Britain will be revived, Hogg said: "I would like indeed to see economic ties improved very much."

TISHRIN on World Responsibility for Mideast

NC2503174991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0545 GMT 25 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper TISHRIN refers to the international community's responsibility for peace in the region. It refers to U.S. officials' statements on the need to find a comprehensive settlement to the Middle East conflict based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338. The paper says that despite the fact that some time has passed since the U.S. Administration presented its ideas on the region's conflict, Israel has so far not shown any flexibility or responsiveness. Instead, the opposite is true. Enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir preceded his Minister Sharon in declaring his government's adherence to the annexation of the Golan Heights and its decision not to withdraw from the other occupied Arab territories. Shamir retrieved from his bottom drawer his outdated plan, which the Arabs had previously rejected, for holding sham elections in the occupied territories, thus perpetuating the occupation and Zionist sovereignty.

Sharon's call to annex parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to implement the deportation and expulsion policy on a wide-scale are part of continuous Israeli schemes to Judaize the Arab territories and alter their demography.

The paper goes on to say that there is no doubt that Israel, which has undermined all peace overtures in the past several years, still clings to the same line; namely, expansionism, aggression, and aborting any real international movement toward a just and comprehensive peace.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: The Arabs showed a great deal of responsibility and eagerness to maintain world peace in their Damascus declaration, which was a sincere call for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on UN resolutions. As Syria has stressed repeatedly, it is clear that peace cannot be achieved without the elimination [zawal] of the Israeli occupation; this is the duty of the international community, which is called on today to implement its resolutions to avert an explosion in the region.

AL-THAWRAH on Need for Israeli 'Submission'

NC2203083391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0550 GMT 22 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] In an editorial entitled "The Requirements of a Just Peace," AL-THAWRAH discusses the international consensus on the need for a peace based on justice to be achieved in the Middle East and Israel's challenge to this consensus. The paper refers to the recent statements by Yitzhaq Shamir, the enemy's prime minister, that Israel will not withdraw from the Golan Heights and that he will take the biblical dream about the establishment of a Greater Israel to any negotiating table. These statements came in the wake of President George Bush's announcement that the time had come to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

AL-THAWRAH says: These statements show clear opposition to a just peace, which first requires that Israel must abandon its policy of occupation, expansion, and aggression against Arab territories and resources.

Concluding its editorial, the paper says: The issue of peace and security in the Middle East demands the settlement of the Palestinian issue on the basis of UN resolutions to ensure the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights. Unless this is preceded by Israel's submission to international will and its acceptance of all UN resolutions, any effort to establish peace in the region will be a waste of time. This is, perhaps, what Israel must realize and recognize amid the current efforts to achieve peace.

Israel Asked To Show 'Goodwill' for Peace

NC2303183991 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
1230 GMT 23 Mar 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israel has persisted in its attempts to shuffle cards in the region and make the crux of the major regional conflict disappear; namely, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the occupation of large portions of Arab lands including the Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, and southern Lebanon. Israeli leaders have issued a string of statements on their readiness to negotiate separately with each Arab state without any preconditions to achieve a so-called peace. This comes at a time when they have reasserted their unwillingness to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories or recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to their land and national soil. They went even further than this when they said they considered the Syrian Arab Golan Heights a part of the alleged Israeli lands. The Golan is Syrian Arab, as attested to by everyone.

It is clear that the enemy leaders, who no doubt will now face the international community's will on the need to restore rights to their rightful owners, are determined to

implement the Greater Israel scheme and Judaize the occupied Arab lands. The U.S. State Department has disclosed that large numbers of Soviet Jews have been settled on these lands, contrary to the allegations made by the Zionists. This increases the concern of Arab states and places additional responsibilities on the shoulders of the international community regarding the future of the Palestinian people.

To cover up these expansionist settler schemes, the enemy leaders have begun playing their familiar security tunes and have asked the United States to intervene with some Arab countries to convince them to hold separate negotiations with Israel to conclude non-aggression pacts. The objective of these Israeli efforts is to dissociate these states from the Palestine question and the issue of the occupied Arab territories and to bury the essence of the regional conflict.

It is well known that the United States itself, through U.S. President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, has established a host of principles to be used as a guide for achieving a just settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Among these principles are the following: handling UN resolutions according to uniform rather than double standards and implementing UN Security Council [UNSC] Resolutions 242 and 338 that call for an Israeli withdrawal. In addition, the United States has not ruled out the convocation of an international peace conference, because peace has to be comprehensive; and there is no way to achieve this except by convening a UN-sponsored international conference.

The Arabs are not asking the international community for anything more than to implement their own resolutions. Hence, Israel is urged and called on to show its goodwill regarding peace—if it has any. As for the Arabs, they have proved—during the Gulf crisis, and also during the Damascus meetings held by the eight Arab ministers—their respect for international resolutions, adherence to legitimacy, and readiness to deal positively with the United Nations. In contrast, Israel is being asked to show its respect for international resolutions by announcing its readiness to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories and respect the Palestinian people's rights. Thus far, Israel has not done this. To make matters worse, Israel has repeatedly affirmed its rejection of withdrawal and its refusal to recognize any Palestinian rights. How then can the Arabs, or some Arabs, be asked to terminate their state of war with Israel or contribute to confidence-building measures in the region before the Israeli occupation is removed? This demand is reminiscent of those who put the cart before the horse, as Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has said. In fact, this also encourages Israel to proceed with its intransigence and with its Judaization of the occupied Arab lands.

The establishment of a just, comprehensive peace requires the Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, and southern Lebanon. Likewise, this requires the convocation of an international conference, as stipulated in UNSC Resolution 344. Moreover, this

objective requires forceful and firm endeavors by the international community to implement their resolutions and employ uniform standards.

The regional conflict is one between the Arabs and Israel. Consequently, neither the solution nor negotiations can be separated. With regard to Israel, it has to show its adherence to international resolutions, because it is the aggressor and usurper. It is bound to find itself in confrontation with the international community if it continues to pursue a policy of equivocation, procrastination, expansion, and settlement.

Editorials on Iraqi Rebellion, Israeli Position

NC2303092191 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic
0550 GMT 23 Mar 91

[From the Press Review]

[Text] In an editorial entitled "What Happens When the Choice Is Between the Regime and the Homeland," AL-THAWRAH comments on the repression and coercion to which the Iraqi people have been subjected under the rule of Saddam Husayn. The paper also notes the empty words and false slogans to which Saddam resorted to deceive the masses. After reviewing that regime's attempts to destroy the values and principles that form the nation's conscience, AL-THAWRAH says: Following its defeat, the ruling regime in Baghdad is using what remains of Iraq's forces and weapons against its own people to crush their escalating revolution. This regime is using the Army, whose military honor it disgraced, against its own people who refuse to allow this man and his regime to rule them any longer and who are waging a mass rebellion to cast off this yoke and settle accounts in light of all the harm it has brought to Iraq.

AL-THAWRAH adds: This regime wants to destroy what is left of the Army in internal battles against the people who are moving to put an end to their many tragedies.

AL-THAWRAH says: The regime and its leader have become antithetical to the homeland and people, and this homeland and people have become antithetical to this regime. This regime cannot overcome this antagonism no matter how hard it tries through deception, repression, or the use of chemical weapons.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by noting: Regardless of the regime's attempts to postpone the inevitable, the Iraqi people will achieve victory soon. They have chosen the course of revolution until the nightmare is over. They will end this nightmare and establish the free democratic system they desire, closing the chapter of successive disasters this regime has inflicted on them for the past 20 years.

Under the headline "No Alternative to Israeli Withdrawal," TISHRIN says: The Israeli enemy leaders daily issue statements about clinging to the occupied Golan Heights, claiming it is part of Israel's territory. These

same leaders daily reject any withdrawal from Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. TISHRIN adds: They even ask Washington to intervene with the Arab states to end the state of war and to start direct negotiations that will lead to agreements and relations. Through President Bush and Secretary of State Baker, the United States has affirmed the need to implement Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and has called for exchanging land for peace, but Israel has rejected these two resolutions, interpreting them in a strange way that is in line with its expansionist aggressive schemes, and announced that it will have nothing to do with UN resolutions.

TISHRIN adds: No one can deny that the Arabs have repeatedly expressed their firm desire to achieve a comprehensive and just solution to the Middle East crisis. They have given practical demonstrations of their

respect for UN resolutions and their adherence to the will of the international community. The paper notes that this firm desire and categorical adherence was highlighted in the Damascus declaration. In light of this situation, the enemy entity must prove its good intentions by affirming its readiness to return occupied Arab territory to its rightful owners in accordance with the Security Council resolutions in exchange for peace. A call for peace in exchange for peace means that the enemy has not relinquished its scheme to devour the occupied Arab territory.

In conclusion, TISHRIN says: If it continues to make empty statements about peace while failing to show any real readiness to withdraw, Israel will eventually find itself in a confrontation with the international community, which will then be faced with living up to its responsibilities.

Afghanistan

Najibullah Addresses 'Defenders of Khowst'

LD2503203491 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Speech by President Najibullah to the people of Khowst; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Dear compatriots, leaders, noble people, and brave defenders of Khowst: As the Pakistani militarists and Pakistani security service spies continue their usual policy of open and flagrant provocations against the national sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan in Khowst, the home of you brave and honorable Afghans, Khowst has become the target of foreigners' conspiracies and plots.

Before the extremists and Pakistan's military units and a number of Pakistani militiamen made preparations for the latest joint attack, the Republic of Afghanistan's attention focused on developments in the area, and we were watching the Pakistani military forces change their deployment along Khowst's borders. Afghanistan received documentary evidence on their moves and informed the UN secretary general, and conveyed its concern to the Pakistani authorities about these irresponsible actions. Afghanistan also expressed its protests to the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul. Yet preparations for a joint attack on Khowst were not stopped. Despite the Republic of Afghanistan's honest desire to normalize relations with Pakistan, Pakistani militarists placed their logistic and transport assistance at the extremists' disposal and appointed a number of their Army advisers, commanders, and generals to direct and organize the attacks on Khowst.

The Republic of Afghanistan carefully studied this specific incident of interference and provocation by Pakistan's forces in Khowst and again informed the UN secretary general and sent a protest to the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul.

In this connection on the night of 23 March Pakistani military aircraft violated Republic of Afghanistan's airspace. This is flagrant and clear proof of Pakistan's interference in the offensive on Khowst. We regret that, despite Afghanistan's diplomatic efforts to prevent these irresponsible and provocative actions on the part of the Pakistani militarists, the extremists and a number of the units of Pakistan's regular Army and militiamen began the attack on Khowst.

Changes in the deployment of Pakistan's forces—among them the artillery and Air Force along the border with Khowst—the participation of Pakistan's military advisers, generals, and a number of organized groups and militia, along with the extremist groups, made up the organized sectors in this attack. Unfortunately, a handful of people who colluded with Shah Nawaz, the well-known spy of Pakistan's security service, stood against the homeland and its high interests. They made a plan

with the extremists and Pakistani spies to leave open a number of roads and passages to the aggressors and to evacuate a number of regions and a number of posts [as heard]. Their treacherous action began in the east and southeast. The extremists thus were able to gain control of Khowst airport.

Regrettably, this conspiracy by the traitors and spies of Pakistani intelligence caused, to some extent, the situation to become tense. Fortunately, other forces who were stationed along this line, in conjunction with other forces in Khowst, immediately formed and strengthened a new line of defense. This move prevented the enemy's advance, and now our units are engaged in repulsing enemy attacks and pushing them back.

As a result of the experience we gained from dealing with extremists' attacks in recent years, we know that most of the operational plans have been drafted by foreign intelligence services. The extremists have had no role whatsoever in these plans; they only implement them. In order to serve their masters, the extremists inform them if a certain area is brought under their control. In Khowst, too, they informed their masters when Khowst airport was captured. Jaji Meydan District also fell to them. We assure our compatriots that Khowst airport is in the control of the state, and units and companies of the Armed Forces are engaged in repulsing the offensive of those treasonous extremists. Khowst has received supplies from the capital. The morale of the personnel and staff in Khowst is high, and they are neutralizing this big conspiracy.

We can state that resorting to these measures is not a sign of the extremists' power and strength. Those with a sound mind and sound judgment among the opposition groups are expressing their readiness to hold talks. Others are trying to prevent a political solution. The extremists have become isolated from the people and have failed politically as well as militarily. By resorting to such conspiracies and intrigues they are trying to gain something.

Heroic defenders and courageous people of Khowst, during this auspicious month of Ramadan, you are faced with a terrible conspiracy. You have proved the Afghan people's courage in defending national honor, territorial integrity, and the independence of the country just like the people of Nangarhar, Qandahar, and other regions of the homeland. During all the years of war, in particular during the last two years, Khowst has stood as a strong bastion of independent defense against repeated extremist attacks. The patriotic elders, leaders, and people of Khowst and Jaji Meydan, as well as the Armed Forces personnel in Khowst, once again displayed their Afghan valor in defending the homeland. They proved they will never submit to attacks by foreign spies and sold out extremists.

Foreign spies and a handful of traitors, who were prepared to fire missiles—in collusion with foreign aggressors—on their own villages, homes, and Afghan compatriots during this auspicious month of Ramadan, will inevitably face defeat. They will always be disgraced

before Almighty God, His creatures, and before the nation, and will remain so in the future too.

Some elements were also deceived by extremists' lies, which said if they do not resist, no harm will come to them. Events in Jalalabad, Oruzgan, Konarha, and Konduz clearly showed that the extremists showed no mercy even to those who cooperated with them; they were killed in a very savage manner. During the recent attacks on Khowst, the extremists once again resorted to such shameful and anti-Afghan actions. I am fully confident that as long as the patriotic and faithful sons of the armed forces and the courageous people of Khowst are alive, they will not bow before the aggressors and the servant of servants, and will choose an honorable death over defeat and shameful captivity in defending the homeland and their trenches.

Friends, compatriots, and courageous defenders of Khowst, you are not alone in defending Khowst. A courageous nation is standing on your side. The messages from Kabul citizens and people in the provinces assure the protectors of Khowst that you are ready to defend heroic Khowst shoulder to shoulder with them. The Republic of Afghanistan Armed Forces Supreme Command, the Homeland Party, its political allies, and other patriotic forces of Afghanistan are standing and will stand on your side. We thank the Afghan Army units, the courageous pilots, units of the National Guard, Sarandoy, and State Security and all defenders of Khowst and Jaji Meydan. We wish you success in defending the homeland against the extremist's and Pakistani violators' aggression.

Courageous compatriots of Jaji Meydan, we were informed today that you have courageously defended Jaji Meydan and your trenches. You have seized weapons and technical equipment; you have killed more than 100 extremists who have not even succeeded in collecting their dead. The pure blood of your freedom-loving fathers and forefathers runs in your veins. You have been defending Khowst and Jaji Meydan for the past 12 years and have earned the wrath of the extremists. I am confident you can neutralize and are neutralizing all sorts of extremist conspiracies and intrigues. Honor be upon you that are giving a befitting response to the aggressors against the sacred land and common home of the Afghans. They will learn a lesson from this. I am fully confident that these hard days that you heroic defenders and people of Khowst and Jaji Meydan face are temporary and transient days. Peace will overcome war, and righteousness will overcome evil.

Courageous defenders of Khowst and Jaji Meydan, under whatever conditions you live or might live in the future, accomplish your national, patriotic, Islamic, and Afghan duty in defending the national honor, independence, and territorial integrity of your proud homeland. Almighty God is with you in this honorable Afghan and Islamic way. The Afghan people are with you and you will prevail. I pray to Almighty God for your success and for the success and grace of the patriotic people of

Khowst during this sacred month of Ramadan, a month of tolerance for Muslims. God willing, and I am confident that Afghan patriotic forces will prevail over the aggressors and they will enjoy the blessings of God in this sacred month. Success comes from God.

Wakil Protests Pakistan's Direct Participation

*LD2503220191 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto
1530 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Message from Foreign Minister 'Abdul Wakil to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar "protesting Pakistan's direct participation in the war in Khowst"—read by announcer]

[Text] His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, UN secretary general: Your Excellency, this is the third letter during the past few days that I am addressing to you. The situation resulting from Pakistan's renewed and continuing aggression against Khowst demands that the Afghan Government embark on every possible measure, first of all through diplomatic channels and diplomatic measures, to put an end to this blatant aggression. I would like to bring to your excellency's attention that Pakistani forces' operations against Khowst have intensified and gained new momentum. Pakistani aircraft have violated Afghan air space and are engaged in reconnaissance flights over Afghan territory. To cite an example, one reconnaissance Pakistani aircraft illegally entered Afghan air space on 23 March and carried out reconnaissance flights over Khowst.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stating all the details of the aforementioned aircraft, conveyed a strong protest to the Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul. In addition, Pakistani artillery forces, on 23-24 March, transferred long-range artillery to the border near Khowst to be used against the province.

All the aforementioned matters are indicative of the fact that, in order to prop up the extremist opposition that is facing a decisive defeat in these operations as a result of the decisive blows of the Republic of Afghanistan Armed Forces, Pakistan is intensifying its aggression against the Republic of Afghanistan. The aggression continues.

I ask you, Your Excellency, on behalf of the United Nations, to send a delegation to the area immediately to assess the situation and discover the facts about the Pakistan's direct military operations against Khowst.

I would like to assure you that the Afghan Government will provide all the necessary facilities for the work of such a delegation. I am completely confident that Your Excellency will not spare any efforts toward ending Pakistan's aggression against the Republic of Afghanistan before the situation is further aggravated.

I would like to point out that all the consequences resulting from this aggression, which endanger peace, stability, and security in the region, will rest on the shoulders of the Pakistan Government.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I wish you, Your Excellency, good health.

[Signed] 'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan

Rebels Destroy 2 Cargo Planes in Khowst Battle

BK2503114291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1130 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 25 (AFP)—Afghan mujahidin have destroyed two cargo aircraft and claimed advances around the garrison town of Khowst, where 11 days of fighting have left more than 100 guerrillas dead, resistance sources said Monday.

Since the March 14 offensive, launched by thousands of mujahidin to wrest control of the besieged town from government forces, the guerrillas claim to have overrun dozens of security posts. The Kabul regime has denied the mujahidin claim, saying the guerrilla attack had been repulsed.

The resistance sources said that as four more posts fell Sunday, government forces had intensified attacks on rebels positions, using napalm bombs and Scud missiles. A Scud fell in one of the newly captured posts "killing a number of mujahidin," Commander Jibril said Monday. He did not give exact casualty figures, but sources close to the resistance said over 100 mujahidin had been killed in the fighting. "Most of the casualties were due to mine blasts," said Na'im Majruh, director of the Peshawar-based Afghan Information Center.

Government troops, who have foiled successive guerrilla attempts in the past 12 years, have laid anti-personnel mines to protect vulnerable points, he said. The rebels said their forces were close to the airport and a rocket attack Monday destroyed two planes on the tarmac. Government troops were facing shortages and planes were dropping supplies from high altitude as landing had become increasingly difficult, Commander Jibril said.

Resistance sources said several government officers had surrendered to the main guerrilla commander, Jalaluddin Haqqani. Analysts said the resistance offensive was apparently aimed at highlighting their cause, following a series of earlier setbacks since Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan two years ago.

Claim Counterattack Fails

BK2603080891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0802 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, March 26 (AFP)—A counter offensive by Kabul regime forces failed to dislodge mujahidin guerrillas who are consolidating their gains around the besieged garrison town of Khowst, resistance sources said Tuesday. The offensive with heavy artillery was mounted Monday in the south of the town to avert its fall and relieve pressure from the mujahidin, the sources said.

The mujahidin resistance claim that in 12 days of fighting they have taken dozens of positions including the suburban Jaji Meydan District, part of Sheikh Amir town as well as the old airport of Khowst which is no longer in use. Resistance forces, whose number was said to be in the thousands, were holding their positions, they said.

President Najibullah in a broadcast to the people of Khowst late Monday said his troops had thwarted the resistance attacks. He acknowledged that heavy fighting was raging in the area, but stressed that the mujahidin had been unable to score a significant victory.

"We reject Najibullah's lie," Najibullah Lafra'i, information minister of the Peshawar-based Afghan Interim Government (AIG), said. He reiterated that Jaji Meydan and the old airport were in mujahidin hands.

Mr. Lafra'i vehemently denied the Afghan ruler's accusations that Pakistani troops were participating in the attacks. "Such allegations are not new," he said, adding that whenever the mujahidin intensify pressure Mr. Najibullah raises the bogey of Pakistan. He said Mr. Najibullah's letters to the United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar also showed his government's "desperation" over the "sinking morale" of Kabul troops besieged in Khowst. He said the regime had so far fired 40 long range ground to ground Scud missiles besides carrying out repeated day time bombing raids on mujahidin concentrations in the area.

Casualties were "high" on both sides, resistance sources said. Some reports said that mujahidin had lost more than 100 people so far.

India

Action Against Iraqi Embassy Officials Demanded

BK2503160891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] India has taken strong objection to the Iraqi officials' firing on a group of demonstrators at the Iraqi Embassy in New Delhi on Friday last. An official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the Iraqi ambassador has been asked to take appropriate action against the officials involved in the incident.

Iraqi Diplomats 'Asked To Leave'

BK2503161691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1452 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] New Delhi, March 25 (AFP)—India has asked the Iraqi Embassy in New Delhi to send back personnel who opened fire on a group of Moslem protestors three days ago, informed sources said Monday. New Delhi told Iraqi Ambassador 'Abd-al-Wadud to ensure the return of "a couple of chaps" who were involved in the firing, a senior Foreign Ministry source said.

"It is not being called an expulsion," said the source, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "We are asking

them to go, but not declaring them persona non-grata or setting a time limit for them to leave," he said. "It is a milder form of a diplomatic reprimand," the source added. He was unable to say exactly how many personnel were being asked to leave, or whether they included diplomats.

The PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) news agency said the Foreign Ministry summoned Mr. al-Wadud on Saturday and asked him to hand over unlicensed weapons allegedly used by Iraqi Embassy staff to Indian authorities. Mr. al-Wadud, who has been posted in the Indian capital since 1986, refused to comment on the action, which PTI said was expected to cause a "setback in bilateral relations." "The matter is expected to figure in talks with a visiting Iraqi envoy this month," it said.

At least three people were wounded when Iraqi staff fired on hundreds of Indian Moslems who attacked the embassy Friday to condemn Baghdad's crackdown on a growing Shiite rebellion. Witnesses said two embassy personnel fired intermittently for some 20 minutes with a rifle and a revolver at the 600 Shiite protestors, who accused the Iraqis of shooting without provocation.

The Iraqi Embassy, in a statement the following day, accused the Moslems of firing at its staff and said Indian officials had failed to protect the mission. PTI said the Foreign Ministry rejected the complaint, saying the Moslem demonstrators, who were marching in a procession to the local United Nations office when the violence erupted, were escorted by police.

India was once a close ally of Baghdad, and its initial stand on the annexation of Kuwait was seen as favouring Iraq. But New Delhi distanced itself from Baghdad in later months, and gave refuelling facilities to U.S. Air Force transport planes shuttling between the Gulf and the Philippines during the allied war against Iraq.

Dubey Affirms Cooperation With UN on Gulf Tasks

*BK2603105091 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Text] India has assured cooperation to the United Nations in carrying out responsibilities to be entrusted to the world body in a new proposal for a permanent cease-fire in the Gulf. The assurance came during a meeting between the foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, and the UN secretary general, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, in New York yesterday. They discussed the Gulf situation in general and its implications for the developing countries. The U.S. draft on a permanent cease-fire is being discussed among the five permanent Security Council members over the past week, but it is yet to be circulated among the 10 nonpermanent members of which India is one. Earlier, addressing the International Peace Academy, Mr. Dubey called for a greater role for the UN peacekeeping force.

Security Forces Arrest 600 Kashmiri Muslims

*BK2403162491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1333 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[Text] Jammu, India, March 24 (AFP)—Indian police detained some 600 Moslems in Kashmir Sunday for hoisting Pakistani flags at public places, after overnight violence left four anti-government militants and three civilians dead. The 600 detainees, believed to be activists of pro-Pakistan organisations fighting for Kashmir's secession from India, were rounded up from several areas in the troubled valley, a government spokesman here said.

The activists raised Pakistani flags above private and government buildings and commercial establishments in the valley Saturday to commemorate the 26th anniversary of Pakistan's Constitution, the spokesman said. He did not specify the charges against the detainees nor give any additional details. Kashmir, India's only Moslem-majority state, is the subject of a longstanding dispute between India and Pakistan, who have fought two wars over its ownership since gaining independence from British rule in 1947.

Several Moslem militant groups are in favour of Kashmir's secession from India and accession to Pakistan. The dominant Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, however, wants independence. Four Moslem militants were killed and six wounded in gunbattles with security forces Saturday night that also left five members of the Paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force injured, the Kashmir government spokesman said. Three civilians were gunned down by suspected Moslem militants in separate incidents in the valley, where violence related to the secessionist campaign has left about 2,200 people dead since January 1990.

Troops Repulse Intrusion Across Line of Control

*BK2503155891 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Text] Indian troops repulsed an armed intrusion from across the line of control in the Keran subsector of Kupwara sector in Jammu and Kashmir today. The attack was supported by heavy artillery and mortar fire. The intruders suffered some casualties but no damage or casualty has been reported on the Indian side.

'Heavy' Pakistani Casualties

*BK2603030491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1756 GMT
25 Mar 91*

[Text] Jammu, India, March 25 (AFP)—Pakistani troops suffered heavy casualties Monday when Indian soldiers repelled their attempt to cross the border into India, a senior defence official said. "Heavy casualties were inflicted on the Pakistanis, and on the Indian side some (soldiers) were injured," the official, who did not want to be identified, said in this winter capital of the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir. He did not give details of the clashes that took place in the district of Keran in northern Kashmir.

Earlier, a defence spokesman quoted by the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said in New Delhi that the Pakistanis had suffered casualties and that no one on the Indian side was injured or killed.

The line of control separating the two countries was set up after the third and last India-Pakistan conflict in December 1971. The first two wars were fought over Kashmir, a predominantly Moslem region claimed by the two countries since the sub-continent achieved independence from Britain in 1947. PTI further quoted the spokesman as saying the Pakistanis were using heavy artillery and mortar fire.

Curfew in Orissa Imposed After Group Clashes

BK2503093291 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] In Orissa, an indefinite curfew has been clamped in Bhadrakh town following clashes between two groups of people last night. Some houses were also set ablaze. The chief minister, Mr. Biju Patnaik, told newsmen in Bhubaneswar today that one person was killed in the clashes.

Preelection Administrative Transfers Reported

BK2503042091 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0240 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] With elections to the Lok Sabha and to some state assemblies due in the third week of May, the ban on the transfer of officials connected with the poll duties comes into effect from today. The Election Commission's moral code of conduct for the political parties in power, both at the center and in the state, will be enforced from the second of next month. The restrictions under the code include a ban on the use of official machinery for election purposes. The provisions of the code relating to other political parties and candidates will come into force from the date of the announcement of the election schedule.

Meanwhile, large-scale transfer of officials connected with the civil administration has been ordered in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Bihar. In Uttar Pradesh, in a major administrative change, 63 senior officials, including 26 police officers, have been transferred yesterday. Administrative changes have also been effected in five sensitive districts, including Faizabad, (Bharaich), and Fatehpur. In Haryana, 17 senior IPS [Indian Police Service] officers have reportedly been transferred, and in Bihar, 20 IPS and state police officials are understood to have been served with orders of transfer.

Parties 'Sharply' Criticize Move

BK2503135091 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The Election Commission is examining the large-scale transfer of officials ordered in Uttar Pradesh [UP], Bihar, and Haryana yesterday on the eve of the enforcement of the ban on such transfers. The chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Seshan, disclosed this at a news

conference in New Delhi this evening. He said the commission will examine whether these preelection transfers violate the spirit behind the ban. Mr. Seshan said the commission will take suitable action if the transfers are against the spirit of the ban and did not elaborate the nature of action.

He also indicated that the polling will be spread over three days between 18th and 26th of May. This is to ensure the movement of poll officials and security personnel from one constituency to another.

Mr. Seshan also announced that the hearing will be held on the 10th of next month on the petition from Sharad Joshi of Shetkari Sangathan [farmers organization] seeking derecognition of Shiv Sena [a Hindu fundamentalist political party]. The petition alleged that Shiv Sena is using religion in election propaganda.

Most political parties have reacted sharply to the reported mass transfer of officials in UP and Haryana. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] vice president, Mr. K.L. Sharma, has said that the transfers make a farce of the election code. He also objected to the prime minister being permitted to use government aircraft, saying it makes the electoral battle unfair.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet, has said that the mass transfers are the blatant violation of the spirit of the election code. He also protested against the alleged removal of the chief electoral officer of Tripura.

Top Sikh Leader Calls For Elections in Punjab

BK2503134891 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1230 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The Shiromani Akali Dal president, Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann, has urged the center to restore the democratic process in Punjab. Addressing a series of rallies in Patiala District today, he said efforts should be made to create a congenial atmosphere in the state for holding elections.

Congress-I Opposes Punjab, Kashmir, Assam Polls

BK2503150491 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1430 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The Congress-I has opposed holding of elections in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and Assam. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, told newsmen in New Delhi today that the true verdict of the people will not be available as there are chances of large-scale violence in elections in these states. He said parliament extended president's rule in the three states on the government's plea that conditions are not conducive for elections. He said only a new parliament can change that decision.

Other Parties Voice Opposition

*BK2603104891 Delhi Domestic Service in English
0830 GMT 26 Mar 91*

[Excerpts] Some major political parties have opposed holding of elections in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. [passage omitted] The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has urged the prime minister not to take any decision on policy matters like holding elections in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. He said any decision on such matters cannot be taken by the caretaker government as per the latest order of the president, Mr. R. Venkataraman. Another party leader, Mr. K. L. Sharma, said the ground reality in Punjab is not conducive for elections. He urged the prime minister not to take any hasty decision about elections in the state.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has reiterated its demand that no elections be held in Punjab. The party leader, Mr. Harkishen Singh Surjeet, said that the recent incidents show the gravity of the situation in the state. He claimed that no political party with any stakes in Punjab wants elections there. The Jammu and Kashmir committee of the CPI has demanded postponement of polls till normalcy is restored in the state.

Meanwhile, the Assam governor, Mr. Lok Nath Mishra, met the prime minister in New Delhi late last night to discuss the prevailing situation in the state and the feasibility of holding elections there.

Assam Political Party Members Resign Posts

*BK2503162691 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 25 Mar 91*

[Text] In Assam, five senior members of the Asom Gana Parishad today resigned from the central committee of the party. They are Mr. Bhriku Kumar Phukan, Mr. Brindavan Goswami, Mr. Dinesh Goswami, Mr. (David Leja), and Mrs. Vijaya Chakraborty. They have been demanding the resignation of the party president, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta. In their separate resignation letters to the party president, they alleged that the general body meeting which began in Guwahati today to decide the crucial leadership issue was unconstitutional.

Businessmen Oppose Severe Restrictions on Imports

*BK2403091891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0837 GMT
24 Mar 91*

[By N. Radhakrishnan]

[Text] Bombay, India, March 24 (AFP)—Indian businessmen are still stunned over a government decision to severely restrict imports in a desperate bid to conserve rapidly depleting foreign exchange reserve. Businesses both large and small described the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) measures as a "sledgehammer" blow that would seriously harm India's import intensive sectors.

The few sympathetic voices here in the country's financial capital were almost totally drowned out by the groundswell of protest. "The cash flow of importers as well as exporters will be totally in shambles," said Chandybhai Udeshi, chairman of Metro Exports, one of the country's leading export houses.

"The RBI directive will virtually cripple industrial activity and adversely affect growth prospects in the coming years," said Abhijit Mazumdar, president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India.

The RBI decision last Wednesday banned the free release of foreign exchange for the import of capital goods, and put tough restrictions on the import of industrial raw materials, components and consumer goods. Banks were directed not to advance money to importers—including state owned firms—against letters of credit, and requests for foreign exchange will now require a number of bureaucratic approvals.

The RBI also drastically hiked the cash deposits—or "margin money"—demanded from importers who apply to open letters of credit for foreign exchange. Importers previously required to produce only 50 per cent margin money were told they would have to make three-month deposits of 133 per cent.

Export-oriented enterprises that need imports were exempt from the old margin money requirement, but would have to put up a 50 per cent deposit under the new regulations. Ramu Deora, president of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, said India's exports would be seriously hit by the new regulations. "The inability of exporters to adhere to their existing export commitments will also result in the loss of their credibility before their buyers," he added.

Industrialists and brokers said the new foreign exchange requirements would seriously cut production in key industries like pharmaceuticals, electronics, plastics, computers, steel and automobiles, all of which rely heavily on imports. Some of Bombay's top industrialists support the RBI decision, however.

It was "very unfortunate, but a necessary step dictated by an extremely difficult balance of payments position which all of us have allowed to worsen," said Darbari Seth, chairman of Tata Chemicals. "The only course left for the industry, government and all of us is to tighten our belts and face the situation boldly and take measures to increase production and make it competitive," added Rahul Bajaj, chairman and managing director of Bajaj Auto Ltd., India's largest manufacturer of two and three-wheel vehicles. But smaller businesses pointed out that the larger cash-rich companies would be more able to meet the bigger margin money requirements and ride out the crisis. "It is a question of liquidity," said Anand Mahindra, president of Mahindra Ugin Steel Company. "Those who have cash will survive. The others will be edged out."

The stock market here, Indian's largest, dipped last week following the RBI announcements, and analysts said it would have fallen farther if mutual funds and government-controlled pension funds had not bought huge numbers of stocks to support prices. The RBI said the new restrictions were essential in view of India's "extremely difficult foreign exchange position." The country has only 2.4 billion dollars in reserve, barely enough to finance two months' imports.

In an interview published Friday, Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha called the decision a "bitter pill," but it was taken to get the country to reduce imports over the next few months, and could be withdrawn once the foreign exchange reserve increases. A well-known steel-maker said India should follow the example of several South American nations which demanded debt rescheduling after admitting they could not pay their debts.

"We should tell the world that our loans need to be rescheduled and that we need some urgent help," said the industrialist, who requested anonymity. "And once this help is forthcoming, we should enact the right policies to get us out of the economic mess." India's foreign debt of 62.8 billion dollars is second in the world only to Brazil's, and its debt-service ratio is now close to 30 per cent.

Meanwhile, a delay in securing an interim loan from the International Monetary Fund could aggravate the foreign exchange crisis. The two billion dollar loan was not expected until after May elections bring a new government and a full-fledged federal budget. New Delhi has also found it increasingly difficult to raise funds abroad.

The Industrial and Credit and Investment Corporation of India, the country's largest development bank, was forced to withdraw a 430 billion yen (3.115 billion dollar) bond issue recently because of a poor response. In the first nine months of the current fiscal year ending March 31, India may raise only 400 million dollars in short-term commercial borrowings on the international market, compared to 1.52 billion dollars during the same period last year. India has blamed its economic crisis on higher oil prices, a drop in remittances caused by the Gulf crisis and a falloff in tourism.

Foreign Exchange Crisis, Import Ban Examined

BK2503120291 Delhi General Overseas Service
in English 1010 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Commentary by Tyagraj Sharma, special correspondent of ECONOMIC TIMES: "The RBI [Reserve Bank of India] Restrictions on Imports"]

[Text] India today appears to have been caught in an unbelievable position as far as its balance of payment, BOP, position goes despite having been one of the better managed economies in the world. Its exports performance during the first nine months of the financial year has been discouraging. Remittances from the Gulf have virtually dried up, and more important, it has had to pay

substantially more for its crude oil imports in recent months. The impact on these developments has been severe on its foreign exchange reserves.

The current BOP position is anything but encouraging. At one stage, foreign exchange reserves were down to 40,000 million rupees or so, barely enough to manage for four weeks. It was not until the first installment of the IMF loan of \$1.8 billion was received that the situation improved [words indistinct]. That was nearly a month ago. Even though negotiations for a second installment of \$2 billion IMF loan are already on, it will take some time, at least till a new government comes to power for it to be finalized. Till then, the caretaker government of Mr. Chandra Shekhar has no alternative but to manage its resources prudently.

The seriousness of the foreign exchange reserves position has now become apparent following the curbs on imports announced by the RBI [Reserve Bank of India] on 20 March. These curbs not only restrict import of raw materials and capital goods, but even seriously affect each and every export sector, including the much favored 100 percent export-oriented unit scheme, the free trade zones and export processing zone schemes. The RBI, too, has fixed steep cash margins of 123 percent for opening letters of credit for import of raw materials under open general license as against 50 percent earlier. In addition, the RBI has raised steeply the margins for imports under other categories. Further, the RBI has banned banks from advancing any money to their importer clients to meet the steep margin requirements. Imports of all capital goods, irrespective of value, too, will now be allowed under foreign currency lines of credit available with financial institutions only. These measures have, of course, invited some criticism, though nobody doubted that the BOP situation was critical. So, curbs on outflow of foreign exchange for import purposes had to be placed; more so, as the country needed the exchange to repay its loans as well. Any default or rescheduling of these loan payments would have led to further lowering of the country's credit rating, something that India can ill afford now.

The RBI guidelines apart, the fact is that the exports have been quite discouraging so far. The trade deficit during the first nine months of the current financial year has already shot up to over 80,000 million rupees. Against 28.50 million rupees in November 1989, imports during the same period in 1990 shot up to a staggering 44,014 million rupees, thanks to the spiralling crude prices. Significantly, India's main sources of crude supply, namely Kuwait and Iraq accounting for 40 percent of its total imports, also dried up. This forced it to buy its requirements from different sources at higher prices.

Overall, the export performance this year is not likely to be very encouraging owing to factors like the onset of the Gulf crisis and the subsequent war, displacement of shipping schedules coupled with prohibitive costs, and the general decline in the world economic growth and,

consequently, world imports. The decision of the United States and some European countries—major markets for India—also affected our exports adversely. The official expectation is that because of all these problems plus the dislocation of exports to West Asia, this year's exports would be around 335,000 million rupees against a target of 360,000 million rupees. Even this figure is said to be an optimistic one. Be that as it may, the fact [word indistinct] for India's BOP position to improve, it is necessary for exports to leapfrog. For this, it would be imperative for the government to give all the facilities, including freedom to import goods and raw materials and machinery for export production. Value addition, the government realizes, has to be encouraged.

Marginal Decline in Population Growth Seen

BK2503134491 *Delhi Domestic Service in English*
1230 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] India's population is estimated to have crossed 84 crores and 39 lakhs, representing a marginal decline in the growth rate. A 1991 census conducted in February shows that the growth rate has fallen to 23.5 percent from 24.66 percent in 1981. The data was released by the registrar general and census commissioner of India, Mr. A.P. Nanda, at a press conference in New Delhi today. The literacy rate in the country has gone up to 52.1 percent from 43.56 percent in 1981. The female ratio has slightly come down from 934 female to 929 female for 1,000 male. India's population represents 16 percent of the world population, and the increase in the last decade alone was equal to the population of Japan and 10 times the population of Australia.

[Paris AFP in English at 1158 GMT on 25 March carries a New Delhi-dateline item on the population figures, adding: "India released Monday the preliminary findings of its mammoth 10-yearly census, putting its population at nearly 844 million, or 16 per cent of the world total. Census commissioner A.R. Nanda told reporters here that India's population totalled 843,930,861 as of March 1, with its male majority numbering 437,597,929. Mr. Nanda said India's population had increased 161 million since 1981, when the last nationwide census was undertaken."]

Iran

DER SPIEGEL Interviews Hashemi-Rafsanjani

AU2503161091 *Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German*
25 Mar 91 pp 199-208

[Interview with Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani by Bernd Doerler, Werner Funk, and Romain Leick; place and date not given: "Saddam Was Blinded"]

[Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, were you satisfied about the disastrous defeat of your old enemy Saddam Husayn?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Saddam Husayn himself is responsible for the defeat. He became a victim of his own miscalculations. There is no feeling of joy about it, as far as I am concerned. We would have preferred that the war had never taken place.

[DER SPIEGEL] Although Iran remained neutral, it is one of the winners of this conflict. Did America also win for you?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] From a military point of view, the United States won. Whether they will also be the political victors remains to be seen. I have my doubts.

[DER SPIEGEL] Were you surprised about the United States' rapid triumph over Saddam's terrifying army?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes. We were not able to anticipate that the Iraqi troops would withdraw in such great haste from Kuwait after the beginning of the ground attack.

[DER SPIEGEL] Your country waged an eight-year war against Iraq without being able to defeat it. What is your explanation for the swift victory of the Americans?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The aerial attacks destroyed the morale of the Iraqi Army. Saddam was blinded. He thought the Americans would only bluff.

[DER SPIEGEL] You called on Saddam Husayn to resign. When do you think he will fall?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I have not called for his resignation, but I have appealed to him to yield to the will of the people, who will continue their liberation struggle.

[DER SPIEGEL] Will you support this popular movement actively?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We do not want to interfere in the internal affairs of Iraq. Our support only goes as far as accepting those Iraqis in our country who seek refuge here. We offer shelter to the homeless and injured.

[DER SPIEGEL] How many Iraqis have so far come to Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] A few days ago in Khorramshahr I was told that some 17,000 refugees had come to the city of Abadan.

[DER SPIEGEL] Are Iranian volunteers fighting against Saddam on the side of their Iraqi brothers in faith?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] No, Iran is not sending fighters to Iraq because we do not want to intervene in this civil war. We do not want to encourage the export of our revolution through war and subversion. We export the revolution only by spreading the ideas of Imam Khomeyni.

[DER SPIEGEL] We find it hard to believe that Iran will completely stay out of the Shiites' liberation struggle in Iraq. Why should you not seize the opportunity and

fulfill Khomeyni's will, who during the war wanted to overthrow Saddam Husayn?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We do not hesitate to prove our moral and political solidarity with the Iraqi people. Yet we will not intervene through the use of arms.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you even rule out arms supplies to the insurgents?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Yes. We will not supply arms to Iraq.

[DER SPIEGEL] Would you tolerate your brothers in faith in Iraq being slaughtered by Saddam Husayn's Republican Guards?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The liberation struggle of a people is always difficult and hard. Still, I believe that the Iraqi people are able to defend themselves very well. The Iraqi fighters do not even want us to intervene. Otherwise, they might be accused of collaborating with a foreign power. Currently, it is not difficult for the Iraqi people to obtain arms. In many cities, the regime has already lost control. There, it is easy to get access to police and army arsenals.

[DER SPIEGEL] After your eight years of war against Iraq, you have demanded \$900 billion worth of reparations. How do you want to enforce the payment of this sum?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We calculated that the war caused us \$600 billion worth of direct and \$300 billion of indirect damage. It is the task of the UN secretary general to form a committee to establish the total amount and the modalities for compensation.

[DER SPIEGEL] What will you do with the Iraqi war planes that landed in Iran during the war? Do you regard these aircraft as a first installment on your claims or as a pawn for negotiations?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] It is not a large number of aircraft, and their value is disproportionate to our demands.

[DER SPIEGEL] How many are there?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] There are 22 fighters and a few civilian aircraft.

[DER SPIEGEL] The Americans have claimed that some 130 Iraqi aircraft were taken to Iran.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Well, this is what they say, but their claims are unfounded. These aircraft belong to the Iraqi people. Our demands to the government in Baghdad are another matter.

[DER SPIEGEL] Under what conditions would you release the aircraft and the crews?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We observe international regulations. We have always said that we would keep them until the end of the war.

[DER SPIEGEL] Did Saddam's pilots desert or was the whole affair a concerted action between Baghdad and Tehran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The aircraft arrived here without our permission. Yet, the pilots are not refugees. Most of them want to return to Iraq later.

[DER SPIEGEL] How was it possible for the aircraft to penetrate Iranian air space unhampered if you were not previously informed?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We did not want to down them because the crews asked for emergency landings. We responded to their requests and told them where to land.

[DER SPIEGEL] Saddam Husayn's defeat has decisively changed the relationship of power in the Gulf. Will Iran now try to play a leading role as it attempted to under the shah?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We have no desire to play the role of a hegemonic power. We want to be friends with all nations in the Persian Gulf. Any solution to the problem that does not create a conflict is only possible if all countries in the area cooperate in a friendly atmosphere.

[DER SPIEGEL] This sounds like a nice resolution. Yet, so far most of your Arab neighbors, in particular Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have been afraid of you. Do you not think that these countries will continue to rely on the United States rather than cooperate with Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Together we are able to create a new security system. We closely cooperate with the countries in the region, and this cooperation is continuously being further developed. Right now we are about to resume diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia. The Americans must leave the region—and one day they will do so.

[DER SPIEGEL] The basic conflict in the Middle East is that the Islamic countries deny Israel the right of existence. How can Israel be integrated into a future peace order?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] First of all, I want to say that Israel has nothing to do with this region. What is happening in the Persian Gulf only affects the states that have access to the Gulf. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the existence of the state of Israel is a thorn in the side of all Islamic states, irrespective of their geographical situation—even Indonesia.

[DER SPIEGEL] Would Iran have entered the war had Israel responded to Saddam's missile attacks and carried out a retaliatory strike?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] They did not, so it makes little sense to discuss it in retrospect.

[DER SPIEGEL] Will there be a new war against Israel in the foreseeable future—with the participation of Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Probably not in the foreseeable future. Still, unless the problem of Israel is solved, a conflict will become inevitable one day. When this

moment comes we will decide whether it also involves Iran. What is certain is that we do not recognize the state of Israel. The Palestinian people, any person who was expelled, must be able to return to their home ground and be able to enjoy their right to self-determination there.

[DER SPIEGEL] But that would mean the end of Israel's existence as a state?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] That is true. The state of Israel was set up on the basis of force and injustice. The Jews may continue to live there as they do now. Yet, they will be part of the population of a state of Palestine.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do you continue to regard the United States as the Great Satan?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We continue to consider the United States to be the enemy of the Islamic revolution.

[DER SPIEGEL] Well, then you must be greatly worried now, because peace in the region will be most decisively influenced by the victorious power, America.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Since the beginning of our revolution in 1979 we have always had the impression that the United States considers us to be its enemy and that it would continue to treat us in a hostile manner. Yet, this does not worry us, because it does not stop us from continuing on our path.

[DER SPIEGEL] How can you prevent the Americans from retaining a military force in the Gulf?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We will use the appropriate means to prevent them from staying there. One can live with an enemy in one's vicinity without being constantly worried. When in Germany you had to live with the GDR and the Soviets in your neighborhood. Were you worried?

[DER SPIEGEL] Sometimes we were. Do you not think the U.S. troops constitute a threat?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Their existence is not useful, but they do not constitute a threat. We are not afraid of them, because we do not want to wage a war against the United States. They have always had bases in Bahrain and Qatar. We have never liked that and always criticized it, and we will continue to do so in the future. There are many other peoples in the region who do not approve of the presence of the Americans.

[DER SPIEGEL] The United States will determine the modalities of peace and security, whether you like it or not.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Sure, if they are strong enough. The United States will certainly not be able to do anything against us and our revolution.

[DER SPIEGEL] At the moment, your relations with the USSR are of little use for building up a counterweight to

the United States. How can the United States be stopped now that the other superpower is vanishing?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] We have never relied on foreign forces, only on our own. We are friends of the Soviet Union and cooperate with them. Yet, no one can expect us to call in Soviet soldiers to help us fight the Americans. We gladly accept the political help of some countries that believe, as we do, that the U.S. presence in the Gulf must end.

[DER SPIEGEL] Why did the USSR and Iranian peace efforts in the Gulf war fail at the very last minute? Was it because of the United States' lack of reconciliation or Saddam Husayn's obstinacy?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] After the beginning of the aerial war, we suggested to Saddam Husayn that he pull out of Kuwait unconditionally. The Iraqis did not accept it. When Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz and Vice Premier Hammadi came to Tehran shortly before the war they told us that they would not release Kuwait under any circumstances.

[DER SPIEGEL] In the spring of last year, you received a letter from Saddam Husayn who wrote that Iraq not only shares a long land border with Iran but also a long sea border. Did that mean that he intended to conquer more than just little Kuwait?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] He spoke about a sea border of 800 kilometers in his letter. That can only mean that in his calculations, he also considered several other countries as belonging to Iraq. Including Kuwait, he would never have arrived at the figure of 800 kilometers. I asked Izzat Ibrahim, the vice president of the Revolutionary Command Council, who brought me Saddam's letter, what was the basis of this calculation of the border. He dodged a specific answer and said that they had roughly calculated the sea border from the island of al-Faw.

[DER SPIEGEL] The world is worried about the ecological catastrophe in the Gulf, which was caused by the Iraqis. How is Iran coping with the consequences?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The smoke that is rising from the burning oil fields in Kuwait has polluted our air. When it rains, the dirt contaminates our fields and our ground water. The oil slick in the Persian Gulf is also disastrous. We have offered the Kuwaitis our help, as we have experience in extinguishing burning oil wells.

[DER SPIEGEL] What was the reason for the scorched earth strategy, which was militarily senseless?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] It is common practice in wars to destroy the enemy's resources. What Saddam did, however, cannot be defended with military arguments. Possibly, he wanted to destroy what he could not keep himself. He was driven by revenge.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, you once said that Iran should be an "anchor of stability" in the region. In order to be able to live up to this claim, your country must also

recover economically. Are you ready to open Iran to Western capitalist investors again?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] It is not absolutely necessary for us to bring about economic recovery by means of foreign investments. We will be able on our own strength to improve our living conditions. That does not mean that we would not use foreign aid if necessary.

[DER SPIEGEL] Is it possible to rely on the support of the West's economic power without giving up extreme Islamic fundamentalist principles?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] I don't think we are having problems with that.

[DER SPIEGEL] To the annoyance of your radical domestic opponents, in one of your Friday prayers you deplored that regarding their sexual lives, the Iranians are too restricted by severe regulations. Will morals become gradually looser now?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] What is currently being practiced in my country exceeds the rules of Islam in terms of rigorosity. Our Persian traditions are more rigorous than what Islam teaches and stipulates.

[DER SPIEGEL] Since the revolution, women's kerchiefs have been a yardstick of ideological severity or tolerance. Could it also be that the dress regulations will be interpreted a bit more liberally?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] There are two currents in our country—a radical one and a more moderate one. The former want women to be covered more, the latter, less. What Islam stipulated is in the middle between those two currents. Everyone can observe these regulations.

[DER SPIEGEL] For economic reconstruction you would also have to let thousands of Western skilled laborers, engineers, and scientists into the country—all infidels.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Infidels can work in our country, too. Many foreigners already work in our country. There are no restrictions on them.

[DER SPIEGEL] For expanding your oil production capacity alone you need \$2 billion. Will Iran incur greater debts on the international capital market in the future?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Our five-year plan envisages that we cover part of our financial needs via foreign loans. We do not want to raise more loans than absolutely necessary so that we may repay them.

[DER SPIEGEL] Thus, no return to the big modernization plans of the old shah regime?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The shah mainly relied on foreign sources. We primarily rely on domestic resources. The shah made himself dependent on the West. We are pursuing a policy of independence. The shah relied on foreign experts. We are relying on our own experts. Large

projects such as the joint petrochemical project with Japan are now operated exclusively by our own people.

[DER SPIEGEL] This does not sound like a consistent economic opening. Can the difference between Islam and modern business, between Islam and capitalism be bridged?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] In our country we live in line with Islamic principles. This does not prevent us from cooperating with capitalist countries as well as with socialist countries.

[DER SPIEGEL] All efforts by the OPEC to push up the price of oil on a lasting basis have failed so far. What kind of price policy will Iran pursue in the future?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] At the moment, the price of oil is at the level that we assumed in our calculations for the five-year plan. We can live and work with the current price.

[DER SPIEGEL] Amnesty International accuses Iran of being one of the countries where most human rights violations occur. You said: "During the 10 years of the revolution we executed fewer people than the Germans in World War II." Why are so many people executed in the name of Allah in Iran?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] A number of terrorists, who had killed people, thrown bombs, and thrown explosives among the believers during the joint Friday prayer, were executed. Whoever commits such crimes deserves the death penalty.

[DER SPIEGEL] Do opposition members still have to expect execution?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] No one is sentenced to death if he has not committed a crime. No one is executed because of his beliefs or his political activities.

[DER SPIEGEL] In the West you gained a reputation as a pragmatist who wants to lead Iran out of the isolation of the years of revolution and war back into the community of peoples. A strong group in parliament sees this as a betrayal of the principles of Ayatollah Khomeyni. What would the late imam say about your current policy?

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] Differences of opinion are usual in our country; they are permitted both by Islam and by our Constitution. I think that we are administering Iran exactly in line with the views of Imam Khomeyni. He taught what we are implementing now.

[DER SPIEGEL] But you have given up his implacable attitude toward the West.

[Hashemi-Rafsanjani] The preconditions have changed. When Imam Khomeyni led the country, we were at war. As long as countries, such as the United States, Great Britain, France, and also Germany, supported Iraq and participated in the war against us, the situation could not change for us. Do not forget that all littoral states of the

Persian Gulf, and even the Soviet Union, turned against us. In this situation it was quite natural that our relations with these countries were not normal. But now, after the end of this war that was waged against us, the international situation has changed. Our policy corresponds to these changed conditions.

[DER SPIEGEL] Mr. President, thank you for this interview.

Grand Ayatollah Invited To Visit Tehran

NC2503160791 Paris AFP in English 1535 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, March 25 (AFP)—Ahmad Khomeyni, son of Iran's late spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni, has invited Iraq's leading Shiite figure to visit Iran, the daily KEYHAN reported Monday. Quoting a letter from Mr. Khomeyni to the grand ayatollah, Abu-al-Qasim al-Khu'i, the paper said: "Iran opens its arms to welcome you, to benefit from your person in various domains, notably in science."

Iran's Shiite clergy had come out in force to denounce what they said was the arrest by Iraqi authorities of Ayatollah al-Khu'i at his hometown of al-Najaf, a holy city to Shiites. Mr. Khomeyni had slammed the "arrogance" of Iraqi authorities, calling upon them not to harm the grand ayatollah.

On Sunday, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said the Iraqi government had returned Ayatollah al-Khu'i to al-Najaf following massive demonstrations by Muslims to protest his seizure but that the cleric was under house arrest in his home town. The Iraqi opposition had earlier said that Ayatollah al-Khu'i had been arrested and forcibly taken to Baghdad, a charge the Iraqi government denied.

Resistance Claims Success in Counterattack

LD2503204791 Hamburg DPA in German 1951 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Cologne (DPA)—The Iranian resistance supported by Saddam Husayn reported today a successful large-scale offensive against Iranian units operating in Iraq northeast of Baghdad.

The Cologne office of the Iranian Mojahedin-e Khalq announced that during the weekend, Iranian Revolutionary Guards and "mercenaries of the Khomeyni regime" had attacked positions of the Mojahedin-e Khalq and the National Liberation Army [NLA] of Iran to the north of the Iraqi towns of Jalula and Khanagin, which are near the border. Thereupon NLA units today carried out a successful large-scale counter-offensive in the areas around the towns of Kefri, Gharah-Tappah, Jalula, and Khanagin over a stretch 150 km long and on average 50 km wide in 11 directions of assault. Here thousands of opponents were killed or wounded, enemy troops wiped out, their fortifications seized, and mercenaries' assembly points destroyed.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq further reported that during the last 16 days, Tehran has continually tried to smash the resistance against the rulers of Iran. These attempts have been dealt a strategic blow with the successful large-scale offensive.

Foreign Ministry Refutes Cease-Fire Allegations

NC2603065391 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] The Foreign Ministry has refuted allegations that Iranian troops are crossing the Iran and Iraq cease-fire lines. The Foreign Ministry said: The Iraqi Government's motive in raising this issue is to divert public attention from the problems stemming from the popular movement inside Iraq.

In an earlier AP report, Iraqi sources claimed that Iran had violated the Iran-Iraq cease-fire agreement and that Iranian soldiers had crossed the cease-fire lines.

The Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said the Iraqi allegations are incorrect and told IRNA last night: As had been announced earlier, Iran has not interfered in any way in Iraq's internal affairs. Allegations of cease-fire violations and reports that Iranian soldiers are crossing the borders are mere fabrications.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed: The Islamic Republic of Iran has fully abided by the cease-fire regulations. In view of the special circumstances prevailing in Iraq, and the possibility of suspicious elements capitalizing on that situation for their own benefit, Iran is following events on its borders with complete vigilance.

UN Envoy Rejects Iraqi Interference Claims

NC2603084491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] The Iranian Permanent Representative to the United Nations called allegations by some Iraqi authorities that Iran is interfering in Iraqi internal affairs completely baseless. The UN envoy categorically rejected any and all such claims.

Mr. Kharrazi sent a letter to the UN secretary general saying that the Islamic Republic of Iran has announced at its highest level that, on the basis of its Constitution, it is not interfering in internal Iraqi affairs and that it rejects accusations to the contrary.

The letter also says that by announcing its neutrality in the catastrophic Persian Gulf war and by adopting an active policy, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran enrolled all means to halt the bloodshed of innocent people and the devastation of Iraq and the region. In fact, Iran took measures to dispatch consignments of pharmaceuticals and foodstuffs to Iraqi war victims in coordination with the UN embargo committee.

In the letter, Mr. Kharrazi stated that on the basis of the norms and principles of its foreign policy, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its deep apprehension over reports concerning Iraqi Government forces' attacks on the innocent Iraqi people as well as attacks and damage to holy sites in that country. In much the same way, it categorically denounced the bombing of residential areas in Iraq and the massacre of innocent people by the allied forces.

Western Countries Said 'In Line' With Saddam

LD2503132991 *Tehran Domestic Service in Persian*
1052 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Hello, dear listeners. The popular uprising in Iraq has entered its 23d day. The politico-military efforts of the Iraqi regime to contain the growing trend of the uprising has greatly intensified. Saddam Husayn's move toward political changes and the relocation of certain pawns in the leading cadres of Iraq are aimed at calming the wave of dissatisfaction and the creation of new outlooks in that country.

These changes are occurring at a time when there are reports that the wave of turmoil has reached the Iraqi capital, putting Baghdad on the threshold of a politico-military explosion. Even though Baghdad seemed calmer than other regions of that country until now, the continuation of the popular uprising and the Iraqi regime's inability to control the turmoil in other regions of the country have put Baghdad closer to its boiling point, despite the extensive military and security control of Baghdad by elements loyal to Saddam. To that end, reports from news sources speak of Baghdad being surrounded and that roads in and out of Baghdad are controlled by the Republican Guard. Political experts believe that the developments in Baghdad will play an important role in political developments in Iraq. Therefore, the Iraqi authorities have focused their largest military mobilization in the capital.

The political changes in the cabinet, however, are the first official admission by Iraq of political mismanagement of that country. It repudiates Baghdad's claim that the current uprising of the Iraqi people is being instigated from abroad. It shows that these allegations are only designed to distract public attention from the real reasons for this crisis. According to political experts, the repeated promises of the authorities in Baghdad to strengthen and deepen democracy in Iraq stem from the fact that the regime's ringleaders have discovered that the people are angry at Saddam's regime, which has brought their country to destruction through personal decisions. They demand a change in the political system to one based on the national will.

It does not seem likely that political changes in the cabinet of that country can answer such a demand. It shows that the ringleaders of Iraq are continuing their

centralized and closed policies and that public administration continues to take place without the decisions of the people. To that end, it is unlikely that the political changes can assist in containing the crisis.

On the other hand, America's new position with regard to its noninterference in the Iraqi regime's use of military helicopters within the country on the condition that the multinational forces are not hindered has led to a noticeable increase in aerial attacks against those provinces that are rising. Iraqi opposition sources regard America's position and the silence of international circles—especially Arab and Western countries—toward the savage massacre of the Iraqi people and the use of conventional and non-conventional weapons—including napalm bombs, chemical gases, and acid—as a green light to the Iraqi regime that will not result in anything except the massacre of Iraqi civilians. Therefore, Iraqi opposition forces have noticed signs of foreign—especially Western—inclination and cooperation with the massacre of the Iraqi people. They are not happy with this. They believe that the aim of this action is probably to prevent the victory of the Iraqi people's will.

The Iraqi Government has announced through its officials on many occasions that it seeks to replace Saddam [as heard]. This does not necessarily mean the rejection of the Ba'th Party, since, as far as the West is concerned, the two elements that can guarantee the political future of Iraq in line with the West's views are the Army and probably the Ba'th Party. In opposition, the elements that can threaten these interests are the revolutionary developments and political changes resulting from the people's uprising. Therefore, the policy of some Western countries is, at this stage, not only in line with Saddam in the massacre of the people; it may also welcome this mission through Saddam.

Saudi Relations Said Linked To Pilgrimage Issues

LD2603101991 *Tehran IRNA in English* 0916 GMT
26 Mar 91

[Text] Tehran, Mar. 26, IRNA—The Islamic Republic of Iran looks at its relations with the Saudi government within the framework of the hajj rituals and other Islamic precepts, said a commentary in JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI Tuesday.

Tehran and Riyadh are resuming diplomatic relations today following the simultaneous issuance of a joint communique in the two capitals last week. Tehran-Riyadh ties were strained after massacre of over 400 Iranian pilgrims in Mecca in July 1987. Riyadh on various occasions, during last year in particular, has shown willingness to improve diplomatic tie with Tehran urging the Islamic Republic to forget about the past.

Iran's conditions for resumption of ties were that Riyadh accept a previous quota of 150,000 Iranian pilgrims annually and allow holding of antipathy [as received] towards infidels' rallies. After the Mecca massacre, Saudi

Arabia imposed a quota of 50,000 pilgrims for Iran and banned holding of any political demonstrations.

Unofficial reports indicate, the Persian daily said, that Riyadh has accepted a quota of 110,000 Iranian pilgrims and allowed holding of rallies in certain squares in Mecca and Medina during the annual hajj ceremonies.

Blaming the "U.S.-dependent policy" of the Saudis for the unstable Tehran-Riyadh diplomatic ties in the years after the 1979 Islamic revolution, the commentary called for a careful assessment of the Saudi government's efforts to re-establish ties with Iran after 12 years of "suspicious attitudes" towards the Islamic revolution.

There is no doubt that such willingness (on the part of the Saudis) cannot be unrelated to the Persian Gulf war and the role of the Saudi clan in hosting 500,000 "capricious American soldiers in the holiest Islamic lands."

Because of this policy the Saudis were detested by the regional and world Muslims, the paper believed adding "now to get out of the quagmire, they have to improve ties with the Islamic Republic."

The daily said the Saudis' insistence that Iran should forget the past is a clear proof to their unfounded hostilities with the Islamic Republic during recent years.

Stressing that the Iranian nation and government cannot disregard the past attitudes, whether positive or negative, of any country, it said the 12-year relations of the Saudi government with Iran, its attitude towards the Islamic revolution and its extensive support for the Iraqi Baathist regime during the 1980-88 bloody war against Iran cannot be forgotten.

The commentary reiterated that Iran attaches great importance to the two holiest Islamic sites (Mecca and Medina) and the holy land of Hejaz [Saudi Arabia]. This same respect and interest for the holy lands makes Tehran to establish relations with the government who takes care of them.

It however reminded that the attitude of the Saudi government towards the issue of hajj can be decisive in the two countries' ties in future.

TEHRAN TIMES Rebuked on Kowkabi, Cooper Cases

ABRAR Backs 'Revolutionary Stance'

NC2503161191 *Tehran ABRAR in Persian*
16 Mar 91 p 8

[Unattributed commentary entitled: "A Guarantor for the Release of Roger Cooper?"]

[Text] The Iranian student who had been imprisoned in Britain, Mehrdad Kowkabi, has finally been released after an extensive investigation. His release took place when those who arrested him did not succeed in procuring the documentary evidence to convict him, having tried their utmost.

The arrest of Kowkabi, and earlier of Kurosh Fowladi, cannot be reviewed separately from the process of political relations between Tehran and London, in the sense that London has tried in this process to persuade Iran toward normalization of relations owing to Tehran's position among world Muslims, and thus to retrieve its lost political status.

Undoubtedly, London is so determined in this regard that, in view of the relations between all the European nations and Tehran, it intends to make up for lost time as quickly as possible and the press is one of the predetermined objectives. [sentence as published]

The TEHRAN TIMES in its Thursday 14 March editorial commented alongside the report on the release of Mehrdad Kowkabi, citing knowledgeable observers, that perhaps Tehran might also give a positive response to London by releasing Roger Cooper?! [punctuation as published] In the opinion of international circles, the TEHRAN TIMES is assumed to be the mouthpiece of the Foreign Ministry. This comment cannot create any reaction as a simple report. What was the meaning of commenting on Cooper's release in the context of Mehrdad Kowkabi's release?

Roger Cooper has been sentenced by the Revolutionary Court and if his release is the issue, it is for the Judiciary to take any decisions in this matter. Political employees and those who write TEHRAN TIMES editorials are also aware of this fact.

Roger Cooper has been condemned in the eyes of the nation, first, for being British and second, for being a spy. Without doubt, those who are in favor of his freedom will have to make massive efforts to produce reasons to justify their actions and will have to face the revolutionary reaction of the Muslim Iranian nation.

Staff members of the TEHRAN TIMES are most certainly aware of the present circumstances in the region and the sensitivity of the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They are well aware that while all eyes are focused on Tehran, we believe that there has not, and will not be one iota of deviation from our revolutionary stance. The continuation this policy necessitates politico-revolutionary awareness and vigilance on the international level, otherwise, the wishful dreams of many of the enemies of the revolution may well come true.

Paper Calls Linkage 'Unexpected'

NC2303015391 *Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI*
in Persian 17 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "TEHRAN TIMES, Once Again Support for a Spy?"]

[Text] The release by British officials of Dr. Mehrdad Kowkabi, the revolutionary and noble student who was incarcerated for 16 months for the crime of remaining steadfast in his support of the decree issued by his eminence the imam regarding the execution of Salman

Rushdie, gladdened the hearts of all those who loved the imam and those who care for Islam.

Simultaneous with this joyful news, which signaled a greater victory for the prestige of Islam and showed the abjectness of its sworn enemies, once again we witness the TEHRAN TIMES' renewed solicitousness with regard to the veteran British spy, Roger Cooper, which was a source of regret from every aspect.

In its editorial on Thursday, which the TEHRAN TIMES carried exactly on the eve of the victorious return of Mehrdad Kowkabi to the embrace of his Islamic homeland, the paper said: "It would seem certain now that London, after releasing Kowkabi, will expect Tehran in return to free the British spy, Roger Cooper, who is imprisoned in Iran, and to use its influence to pave the way for the release of British hostages in Lebanon."

The paper adds: "Iran will most probably respond positively (to the matter of Kowkabi's release) and it is for this reason that some political observers believe that this stance may result in the release of Roger Cooper within a week."

It was quite unexpected on the part of TEHRAN TIMES officials and employees, whose sincerity as regards the revolution, its late leader, and Islam cannot be doubted, that they should connect the issue of a revolutionary and honorable Muslim to the issue of a seasoned British spy such as Roger Cooper!

As to the Islamic Republic of Iran's evaluating the British Government's action as positive and expending effort and cooperation to obtain the release of the British hostages, it is a plausible statement. How can the linking of this issue to that of a treacherous spy such as Roger Cooper be justified? This is blatant disrespect for the sanctities of Islam and those who are safeguarding them with all their might.

The question is: Why has the TEHRAN TIMES repeatedly brought up the issue of Roger Cooper over the past two years on various pretexts? Why has it, in some manner or other, predicted his release? We would have expected that if someone else had tried to link the issue of Kowkabi to Roger Cooper, the TEHRAN TIMES would have rejected it with logical reasoning. We would have expected it to warn against any such irreverence concerning Islamic and revolutionary values.

Roger Cooper is a spy who should complete his sentence. Any mention of his release in connection with Mehrdad Kowkabi's release is flagrant cruelty inflicted on Islamic and revolutionary values, with no other result except wounding the pure feelings of those people who have sacrificed their all in the path of Islam and the revolution.

It is hoped that the TEHRAN TIMES will henceforth display greater perceptiveness when it deals with issues, and that it will attach greater importance to revolutionary and Islamic values.

DPRK Radio, Television Chief Departs

NC2203085491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Text] Mr. (Chung Ha-chung), director of the DPRK radio and television organization, left Tehran for Pyongyang last night after a one-week stay in Iran. He was seen off by Mr. Hashemi, managing director of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran [VVIRI].

In an interview with our correspondent, the director of the DPRK radio and television organization expressed satisfaction with his visit to Iran and said: There are excellent prospects for bilateral relations between the Iranian and DPRK radio and television organizations. He added: During our visits to the VVIRI centers in Tehran, Shiraz, and Esfahan, we saw that Iranian radio and television have reached a very high standard as far as technology and technical equipment are concerned.

VVIRI Managing Director Mr. Hashemi also spoke to our correspondent. Noting his satisfaction with the visit by the DPRK radio and television organization director, he expressed the hope that bilateral technical and radio-television cooperation will increase.

Radio, TV Head on Future Activities

NC2203095591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 22 Mar 91

[Interview with Mohammad Hashemi, managing director of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by unidentified reporter in Tehran on 21 March—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Mr. Hashemi, at the end of the visit by the head of the DPRK radio and television organization, please tell us how you assess this visit and the prospects for cooperation between the two countries' radio and television organizations.

[Hashemi] In the name of God, the almighty and merciful, I would like, first of all, to extend best wishes for a happy new year. The DPRK radio and television director came to Iran at the invitation of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran [VVIRI]. He visited some [word indistinct] and some of the VVIRI installations. He also visited Shiraz and Esfahan and the VVIRI centers there. In general, he was favorably impressed by the Islamic Republic.

During the visit a memorandum of understanding was signed on cooperation between the DPRK radio and television organization and the VVIRI. If this memorandum of understanding is implemented correctly, at the very least this will allow the people of the DPRK to become acquainted with the Islamic Revolution's achievements while the people of the Islamic Republic will become acquainted with the DPRK. It will also reveal the opportunities available to the two sides. Of

course, the memorandum of understanding covers technical aspects and programs. News will be exchanged, and the DPRK official expressed interest in making greater use of our news. I believe this visit was useful, will have favorable repercussions in the future, and will help introduce our nation in that region.

[Reporter] Mr. Hashemi, today is the first day of the new year. I would like to congratulate you on this occasion and ask you to discuss what programs and policies the VVIRI will pursue in producing and broadcasting programs and expanding its technical potentials in 1370 [year beginning 21 March 1991].

[Hashemi] This year we are in the second year of the five-year plan, at least as far as the VVIRI is concerned. We were unable to do much in 1368 [year ending 20 March 1990], but we were able to double our activities in technical expansion and development projects in the year that has just ended, which was also the first year of the five-year plan. Work on several radio and television centers was completed. For example, the Gorgan radio and television center became operational and the Yasuj center started trial operations and will be inaugurated early this year. The Semnan center has also started trial operations and will be inaugurated early this year. Work has been completed on several strong television transmitters. One has been inaugurated and the others will follow. Overall, the volume of our development projects in 1369 [year ending 20 March 1991] doubled in comparison with 1368.

As far as programming is concerned, I think that we witnessed spectacular growth in the quality and variety of VVIRI programs, especially in television. We can say that people were generally much more satisfied in 1369 than they were in the past with the variety and quality of the programs. Their phone calls on various occasions confirmed this. We plan to continue this pace of growth and expansion in 1370.

As far as technical aspects and the expansion of coverage are concerned, we will, God willing, witness a great leap forward in view of the allocation granted to the VVIRI and we will do much more than we did last year.

As for the programs produced by the VVIRI in general and the Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran in particular, we hope to be able to take big strides and to introduce the Islamic Revolution and its achievements more. We hope these programs will meet the standards of quality and variety so that more and more people are satisfied with them.

We also plan to develop our external services as far as our coverage and broadcasting hours are concerned, God willing.

[Reporter] Mr. Hashemi, please tell us how the VVIRI's budget for this year compares with last year's.

[Hashemi] As you know, the VVIRI drafts its budget annually under the five-year plan. There will naturally be

some fluctuations in our allocations throughout these five years. Our overall allocation for 1370 is slightly higher than what we received in 1369, but there has been a considerable increase in our foreign exchange allocation, which should affect our current expenses and programming. The increase in our allocation is greater than that given to some sectors, but less than that received by others. Some ministries, such as the Education Ministry, have been given a 25-30 percent increase in their allocations, while in other cases the increase has been much lower. The percentage increase in the VVIRI's allocation was about average. How we use our allocation will depend, of course, on the prices of the goods we purchase throughout the year. If prices do not rise, then the increase in our allocation can be considered a real increase. If prices do go up, however, then ultimately we cannot consider this percentage increase as a real increase. It can be considered a quantitative increase but not a qualitative one.

[Reporter] Will this create problems for development projects in 1370?

[Hashemi] The VVIRI can absorb more and it can offer more. In 1369 we used 100 percent of our allocation in the first eight months of the year. In other words, we had no additional funds to use in the remaining months. In view of the fact that television production does not have any natural limits and that the quality of our programs improves the more money we have, we compile a production program at the beginning of the year on the basis of the allocation we receive for this purpose. The bigger the allocation we receive, the better the programs we can produce. We have planned for our activities in 1370 in accordance with the allocation we received. The answer as to whether we need a bigger allocation or whether we could absorb such an increase is yes. In the programming section we can absorb up to an additional 2 billion tumans or 20 billion rials, and there is the need for this. We did not receive this amount however; we only received about 1.3 [not further specified]. As for current expenses, we could have absorbed a 30-40 percent increase. Such an increase would have been favorable because our society demands more varied and better radio and television programs.

Much can be done in radio and television in general and in television in particular and there is a need for a bigger allocation. There has, however, been a considerable increase—in fact a doubling—in our allocation compared to what we received in 1368 and earlier. Many of the problems have been solved. If your question, however, is whether there is room to absorb more in radio and television, then the answer is yes. More can be absorbed in terms of both programming and current expenses. There is the ability and the need to do this in both areas.

[Reporter] Thank you very much.

[Hashemi] You are welcome.

Pakistan

Reports of Troop Movements in Kashmir Denied

BK2603154091 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Defense sources in Islamabad today categorically refuted the Indian media reports about Pakistani troop movements in the Keran sector of Kashmir. The sources described the Indian media reports as totally baseless and said no such activity has taken place. They added, however, that Indian troops today and yesterday fired on citizens without any provocation in the (Athmakan) area, killing one citizen and injuring another. The sources said Pakistani troops responded appropriately.

Kashmir Official Urges U.S., UN Action

BK2503022691 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] The federal minister for Kashmir Affairs and Northern Areas, Sardar Mehtab Ahmad Khan, has urged the United Nations and the United States to take effective steps similar to the ones they took in connection with Kuwait to save Kashmiri Muslims from Indian atrocities. He said this while presiding over a seminar entitled post-war situation in Gulf and its impact on Kashmir in Islamabad last evening. He said the status of India on Kashmir is nothing more than that of a tyrant and oppressor and the Kashmir issue is as serious now as the Kuwait issue had become after the Iraqi occupation. Speaking on the occasion, Azad Jammu and Kashmir President Sardar Mohammad Abdul Qayyum described the continuing struggle for freedom in Indian-occupied Kashmir as unprecedented.

Sharif Leaves for One-Day Visit to Kuwait

BK2503063291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0600 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif left Islamabad this morning for a one-day visit to Kuwait. He is the first Muslim head of a government to visit Kuwait after its liberation. The prime minister will hold talks with Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'ad al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah.

The purpose of the prime minister's visit is to express Pakistan's solidarity with the government and brotherly people of Kuwait who are embarking on the reconstruction task of their country. The prime minister will also tour Kuwait city to assess the destruction caused during its occupation and the Gulf war.

Shiites Demonstrate Against Saddam in Lahore

BK2503145691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1446 GMT
25 Mar 91

[Text] Lahore, Pakistan, March 25 (AFP)—Some 300 people belonging to Pakistan's Shiite minority

demanding the ouster of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn at a demonstration here Monday, witnesses said.

Protesting atrocities carried out against the Shiite community in Iraq, the demonstrators carried banners such as "Saddam or Hitler" and "Islamic revolution will be imposed in Iraq also". After marching through the streets of the Punjabi capital, Lahore, the protestors dispersed peacefully, the witnesses said.

The rally was organized by the pro-Iran Tehrik-i-Nifaz-e-Fiqah Jafria (TNFJ), a coalition partner of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's Peoples Democratic Alliance (PDA). The faction had participated in several pro-Saddam rallies in the runup to the U.S.-led assault that liberated Kuwait from Iraqi forces last month.

"As a PDA partner, we supported Saddam, but now we have come to the conclusion that he betrayed the Moslem cause and must be removed immediately," TNFJ leader Sajid Naqvi told the rally. Describing President Husayn as "a fascist who has done great damage to his people," one speaker bitterly criticized the Iraqi leader for "atrocities" carried out on Shiites in Iraq.

Iranian Envoy Offers Assistance to Oil Industry

BK2503144291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
1400 GMT 25 Mar 91

[Text] Javad Mansuri, Iranian ambassador to Pakistan, made new proposals to promote ties between Pakistan and Iran during a meeting in Islamabad today with Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan, federal minister for petroleum and natural resources. During the meeting, the Iranian envoy offered research and training facilities for the petroleum industry. They also exchanged views on setting up oil refineries and on pipeline installation projects.

Ishaq Khan, Sharif Greet Bangladesh Counterparts

BK2603081391 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif have expressed their confidence that the glorious relations based on identical views between the brotherly Islamic countries of Pakistan and Bangladesh will continue to grow stronger for mutual benefit.

On the occasion of Bangladesh Independence Day, the president and prime minister, on behalf of the Pakistani Government and people, sent separate messages to acting president of Bangladesh Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed, expressing their best wishes for the Bangladeshi Government and people. They offered full cooperation in improving the present relations between the two Islamic countries. The prime minister has also sent a message of the same nature to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Atomic Energy Commission Chief Interviewed*BK2503100891 Karachi DAWN in English
23 Mar 91 pp 1, 16*

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Islamabad, March 22—Mr Munir Ahmed Khan, Chairman, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), has said that all hurdles except financial in the way of acquiring the French and the Chinese Nuclear Power Plants (NPP) costing together about two billion dollars have been removed. In an exclusive interview to DAWN, here on Friday [22 March], Mr Khan hoped that the contract for the 300 mw [megawatt] Chinese plant costing about 500 to 600 million dollars would be finalised before the end of 1991.

He said the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) had never been a hurdle in the way of the two offers. "Undemocratic set up in Pakistan probably was for France at one time but this too has disappeared," he added. He said the Chinese contract could not be signed earlier because China's own 300 mw station was delayed, "now it is expected to be commissioned in May or June. After that our technical team will visit China to finalise the contract."

In the case of France, he said negotiations came to an abrupt halt in August 1990, then they wanted the Gulf war to end before resuming the talks. "France was going to give us a firm date by December 1990," he added. Mr Khan did not know exactly when these negotiations would be resumed, but guessed that as soon as a new team was installed in the Foreign Office, substantive talks would begin with France.

He disagreed with the suggestion that President Mitterrand was no more interested in selling the plant to Pakistan and said that in the first place no official word about this has come from Paris and secondly in his opinion there was no reason for France to give up a commercial opportunity.

"You see the US has already squeezed France out of the Middle East market, why should it then give up an assured order," Mr Khan wondered.

NUCLEAR SCIENTISTS: The PAEC Chairman said Pakistan had enough nuclear scientists to operate and maintain at least about three medium sized nuclear power plants. Also, he was confident that the supply of fuel would not pose any problems. He said the price of uranium in the world market had bottomed off and the enrichment services too were available at highly economical rates.

"So what we will do is to fly in fuel for a year for say a 1000 mw plant which would weigh no more than 25 tons and cost about 100 million dollars compared to about a billion dollars for importing equivalent quantities of oil which we cannot store and neither do we have a billion dollars in spare to tie up in such oil.

With supplies for a year in hand he added we could enter into contract with the cheapest sources of enrichment services for regular supplies and also acquire licence for designing the specific fuel locally. This way, he said, nobody could blackmail Pakistan," and if they did blackmail, we will fall back on the reserves and in the meanwhile go to other enrichment services or do it on our own under licence.

In his opinion, Kahuta was too small a facility for providing the enrichment services needed for a 300 mw plant immediately. He however, pointed out that the 120 mw KANUPP [Kahuta Nuclear Power Plant] facility was being run on indigenous fuel for over a decade.

His only worry seems to be money, "you see we do not have the required cash and if we go for commercial loans as World Bank won't lend us money to buy a NPP, the lender would ask for an annual interest of about eight per cent and a repayment period of ten years starting immediately.

Pakistan in his opinion cannot afford these terms, "we are looking for softer terms. Say, an interest rate of about seven per cent and a repayment period of 20 years starting from the time the plant is commissioned." He said Pakistan should accelerate its oil and gas exploration efforts, make use of local coal, develop hydro resources but simultaneously it should also make serious efforts to produce nuclear power.

CHEAPEST SOURCE: Because, in his opinion, not only it was the cheapest and an inexhaustible source of energy but its spin off would help expand vital industrial base in the country. More importantly, he said, nuclear power was cheaper by about 25 per cent to 45 per cent compared to conventional sources.

When asked why we cannot fabricate a series of smaller plants indigenously as it seems very difficult to mobilise resources to purchase NPP from outside, Mr Khan rejected the idea as "unrealistic".

"You see we do not have the industrial and manufacturing base to undertake this task. Also, it is a highly serious business, especially the safety aspects, we cannot compromise on this," he explained. Also, he said the most of the commercial size of a plant was 600 mw, minimum being 300 mw and maximum 900 mw.

"Those who are talking of smaller indigenous stations are only playing to the galleries, and indulging in politics without knowing what they are talking about," he said with feeling.

He said the best way to attain self-reliance in nuclear power was first to latch up with friends like China and France, make repeat plants with their help and in the process acquire the needed knowhow and technology. And then we can go on a spree of deletion until we reach the self reliance point, he added.

He agreed that if Pakistan were to sign the NPT, it can get NPP at more economical rate as others would also

come in and compete with China and France but he thought no Government can take this risk. "I know because I have worked with seven governments."

He said India was the main hurdle in the way of Pakistan's signing of NPT. "but now I think India too is likely to be asked to sign by not only the U.S. but also the USSR."

He said he was basing this assumption on the concern being shown in the U.S. against weapons of mass destruction. "the U.S. and its new found ally USSR would not only like to see these weapons eliminated from the Middle East but also from other parts of the world also to make it a safer and more peaceful place to live," he concluded.

New Secretary General of Foreign Ministry Named
*BK2603145291 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES
in English 26 Mar 91 p 1*

[Text] Islamabad, March 25—Mr. M. Akram Zaki, till now Ambassador to the People's Republic of China arrived here today to take over his new assignment as Secretary General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Secretary General, M. Akram Zaki is a career diplomat. He joined the Foreign Service in 1954 and has held diplomatic assignments in Pakistan Missions at London, Brussels, Rangoon, New Delhi, Rome, Berne, Ottawa and Washington. Before his appointment as Ambassador to China, Mr. Akram Zaki served as Pakistan's Ambassador to the Philippines, Nigeria, Benin, Cameroon and Gabon. He has also served at the Headquarters as Director (1965), Deputy Director Civil Service Academy, Lahore (1965-68), Director General (1972-78) and Additional Secretary (1986-87).

New Air Chief Promoted to Air Chief Marshal
*BK2203153491 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 22 Mar 91*

[Text] Air Marshal Farooq Feroze Khan [newly appointed air chief] is being promoted to the rank of air chief marshal with effect from 23 March, according to an announcement of the Defense Ministry in Rawalpindi today.

Problems Beset War on Opium Production
*BK2503042491 Hong Kong AFP in English 0352 GMT
25 Mar 91*

[By Shah Alam]

[Text] Bajaur, Pakistan, March 25 (AFP)—Like a traffic cop the Pakistani official stretched out his hand, pointed towards a distant snow-capped mountain and said, "beyond it lie the evil crops." Azmat Hanif, spearheading the fight in this tribal area against the opium poppy, was underlining how difficult—if not impossible—it is to totally eliminate the plants that provide raw

material for clandestine heroin factories. Bajaur is one of the six districts in Pakistan's northwest described by officials as the cradle of opium poppy farming along the border with Afghanistan.

The government is under pressure from the United States to curb drug trafficking. But its writ does not effectively extend to a bulk of the tribal belt—mountainous terrain where tribal chiefs and councils make the law. The lack of roads keeps isolated the area from Islamabad's influence and control. Where there is road, however, dramatic results are evident. The fields along the only paved road in Bajaur now have mustard crops that replaced poppy, thanks to internationally aided development projects. "Road and writ go together," said Mr. Hanif, the political agent or key official in Bajaur. He added that there were plans in hand to construct a 40 kilometre (25 mile) new road that would enable him to target poppy crops in remote points.

Growing opium poppy, or koknar as it is locally called, is an age-old occupation of tribal farmers. The crop sown in November-December is ready for "milking" in April by making a cut in the seed cone at the flower end through which the liquid opium flows. Farmers said a kilogram (half pound) of opium is sold for about 1,800 rupees (80 dollars), bringing handsome yearly crop returns, and no irrigation is needed. Bakhtpoor Mian, a Bajaur farmer who destroyed his koknar this season under what he called official persuasion and pressure, said poppy has been a "means of livelihood for us for generations." "If we don't have employment or irrigation water to grow other crops how can we survive," said the 55-year-old bearded tribal. "If the authorities don't provide a tubewell for us we will return to poppy next November."

Mr. Azmat said more than 100 wells have been installed since the mid-1970s in the Bajaur Valley to irrigate about 6,000 acres, and more are planned. In Bajaur, as well as in the neighbouring district of Dir, the officials emphasized the government was resolved to maintain the pressure. "There can be no compromise on this policy," said Dir Deputy Commissioner Gulraz Shah, claiming that except for three pockets his entire district was free from the opium plants.

With financial and technical assistance from the United States, European Community (EC) and the United Nations, development projects are being carried out in different parts. The schemes for building roads, providing irrigation facilities and levelling uneven lands are designed to encourage the peasants to switch to crops other than opium poppy. In the enchantingly scenic Buner District, a 15 million dollar four-year development project funded by the EC is now in its second year.

Shakil Durrani, commissioner of Malakand division comprising the six districts, said constructing roads and laying wells were the project's main focus. A complete ban has been imposed on poppy cultivation in the accessible parts of the six districts, helping reduce poppy

planting from 1,100 acres last year to 700 acres this year, according to Mr. Durrani. He said in the enforceable area 75 per cent of the crops had already been destroyed and the remainder would be uprooted before they were ripe for opium extraction. In inaccessible zones that are not yet covered by the ban because of administrative difficulties, the poppy-growing area was estimated at 3,500 acres—a decrease of 500 acres over last year. Mr. Durrani said he had proposed that the government purchase a U.S.-made aircraft for aerial spraying to destroy the opium crops.

During an anti-poppy operation in Buner, as police and farmers uprooted opium plants to clear a field, the locals stressed the problem could not be solved by force alone. Poverty haunts the mountain dwellers who need job opportunities, adequate irrigation, drinking water, land-levelling assistance, roads and cash grants. "If promises are not kept we will have no option but to retake to poppy cultivation," said 52-year-old Iltaf Hussain, who was lucky to find employment in Britain. He said a quota should be fixed for the tribal people in recruitment of workers for the oil-rich Gulf states.

Officials privately agree that a permanent solution requires adequate funding. Heroin factories and intermediaries secretly buying opium from the farmers also have to be curbed, one official said. According to reports in Pakistani newspapers, about 200 such factories operate in the tribal agencies of Khyber and Mohmand and their produce is smuggled to India, Iran, Europe and the United States.

Sri Lanka

LTTE Spokesman Rejects New Elections Offer

BK2603071191 Hong Kong AFP in English 0701 GMT 26 Mar 91

[Text] Colombo, March 26 (AFP)—Tamil Tiger guerrillas Tuesday rejected President Ranasinghe Premadasa's offer of fresh elections to end the bloody separatist war. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) said it wanted talks to "solve the Tamil problem on the basis of self-determination" before taking part in any balloting. Lawrence Thilakar, an LTTE spokesman in Paris said by telephone that Colombo was "imposing impractical, harsh and unjust conditions" to reopen negotiations on the island's ethnic crisis.

Meanwhile, LTTE activists blew up an armoured personnel vehicle in northeast Thampalakamam region in coastal Trincomalee District, killing one soldier and seriously wounding two, military officials said here Tuesday.

President Premadasa renewed his peace offer to the LTTE at the weekend and urged the rebels to contest provincial council elections and end the bloodletting in

strife-torn Northeast where minority Tamils are concentrated. "It is not too late for the LTTE to enter the democratic mainstream. If the LTTE gives up violence, the government is prepared to lose no time in holding fresh elections to the Northeast Provincial Council," he said Friday. At another public meeting the following day, Mr. Premadasa made a similar offer and said peace and unity were "the most urgent national imperatives today."

The military Tuesday announced fresh indefinite curfews in two areas in northwest Mannar District where hundreds of heavily armed soldiers continued mopping up operations after beating off a major LTTE attack on two camps. According to the military, over 300 LTTE guerrillas, including teenagers and women, were killed by security forces, backed by air and sea, in repulsing the attacks on Kokkupadayan and Silavathurai camps last week. Security forces lost 26 soldiers killed in action and one sailor gunned down while attempting a beach landing in Mannar during the fighting which subsided at the weekend. Nearly 60 soldiers were wounded.

Defence authorities have denied LTTE claims that they captured Kokkupadayan Army Camp and another in Vavuniya District, further east of Mannar District, in the latest LTTE offensive first launched last Tuesday night.

There has been an upsurge of violence linked to the LTTE in the past week across the embattled northeast fuelling speculation that both sides were trying to strengthen their bargaining positions in the event of fresh negotiations.

The LTTE spokesman, Mr. Thilakar, described as unfair Colombo's demand that the group's elusive leader Velupillai Prabhakaran should be present at any future dialogue with the government. Mr. Thilakar said they were concerned for Mr. Prabhakaran's safety.

Secret peace talks lasting 14 months between the LTTE and Colombo ended in failure when the guerrillas resumed their separatist campaign with attacks on police and security installations in the Northeast of June 11. Since then, over 6,000 people have died in bitter fighting.

Youth Carrying Heroin Detained at Airport

BK2303102291 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0848 GMT 23 Mar 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 23 (LANKAPUVATH)—A youth returning to Sri Lanka after a visit to India was nabbed this morning with 460 grams of heroin in his possession by detectives of the police narcotics bureau at the Colombo International Airport, Katunayake. Police told LANKAPUVATH that the young man with the heroin strapped to his legs was arrested, as he was leaving the airport terminal. He had arrived on board a flight from Bombay.